

# EXHIBIT 14

# Balter's Blog

**A blog about politics, science, archaeology, human evolution, jazz, culture, and the meaning of life by Michael Balter, a journalist and journalism professor based in Paris and New York (aka The Blog for People Who Don't Have Time to Read Blogs.)**

## StatCounter

### Featured Post

**A #STEMToo Rogue's Gallery of sexual harassers, predators, and bullies in the sciences [Continually updated]**

Since fall 2015, in collaboration with victims and survivors who have served as primary sources for my stories, I have had the privilege ...



### Quotes of the Moment

**"Lying is done with words and also with silence." --Adrienne Rich**

### About Me



 **Michael Balter**

I have been a working journalist for more than 40 years, beginning in Los Angeles as an investigative reporter and then in Paris as a travel, food, and science writer. For more than 20

Saturday, April 25, 2020

**Field school directors ask why umbrella archaeology group has failed to respond to serious allegations related to sexual assault, coverups, bullying and retaliatory firings [Updated June 9: How grad students were pressured into excavating at IFR field schools.]**

Last month, I reported on a series of [very serious allegations](#) concerning the executive director of the Institute for Field Research, Ran Boytner. The IFR is a sort of umbrella organization that sponsors archaeological field schools all around the world, charging students significant amounts of money for living, working, and excavating at sites across the globe. The allegations included a case of sexual assault by Boytner against a field school student; covering up sexual assault allegations against other archaeologists serving as field school directors; lying to colleagues about what he knew about such allegations; bullying and sexually harassing staff members at the IFR's offices in Los Angeles; and firing staff members in retaliation for whistleblowing.



Willeke Wendrich

years I have covered anthropology and archaeology writer for Science, Audubon, Scientific American, SAPIENS, and other publications. I have also covered sexual misconduct for The Verge, Scientific American, and others; I write about mental health, especially schizophrenia; and I engage in occasional media criticism. I returned to the USA in October 2017 after 30 years in Paris, and now live in the New York City area, where I currently teach journalism at City College of New York (I previously taught journalism at Boston University and New York University.) For more about me and what I do, copies of my articles, information about my book, and other goodies, please visit **MY WEB SITE**

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## The Goddess and the Bull

As I pointed out in the original report, some IFR board members, including the immediate former chair of the organization's board of governors, UCLA Cotsen Institute director Willeke Wendrich, have actively worked to cover up this alleged misconduct by Boytner, including lying to me and others about what they knew not only about Boytner's history--but also about a field school director [who had been found guilty herself of retaliating against students](#) (Danielle Kurin of UC Santa Barbara.)

The allegations have been greatly disturbing to many field school directors who work under the IFR umbrella, both out of concern for the students they are responsible for, and for their own reputations. Within the past few days, a group of IFR field school directors wrote to the IFR board, as well as their fellow field school directors, to express their concerns. With thanks to the sources who provided me with the text of the email, I am reproducing it here:

Dear IFR field school directors-

You are cc'd and bcc'd on this email because your contact information appears under your respective field school faculty on the IFR website. This may be relevant to all those affiliated with your program, so we encourage you to share this with any instructors who are not listed there.

First and foremost, we sincerely hope that you and your families are healthy and safe wherever you are in the world. Since our collective attention is now focused on other pressing issues, perhaps not all of you are aware of the recent public allegations made against certain IFR staff, board members and field school directors. You can read those here:

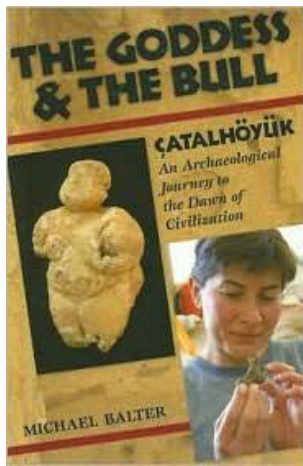
<https://michael-balter.blogspot.com/2020/03/chief-of-international-archaeology.html>

<http://michael-balter.blogspot.com/2020/03/uc-santa-barbara-kept-misconduct.html>

These extremely serious allegations seem to be substantiated by official records and corroborating testimonies from multiple sources. Many of us trusted Michael Balter's reporting in the past, including those IFR board members who took a firm public stance against the SAA mishandling of the Yesner case.

It has been over a month since these allegations were published, but so far not a single statement from the IFR. Several of us are already receiving anxious emails and phone calls from colleagues, administrators, students and their parents. And many of us feel that coronavirus, universities' closure and the IFR summer program cancellation cannot justify this prolonged silence, especially since the IFR keeps announcing to the world that they (i.e.- we) are already working on preparing the 2021 cycle and are asking students to defer their fees to reserve seats on our programs.

Cc'd here are three of our fellow IFR field school directors who are also



My book about Neolithic Catalhoyuk in Turkey and the origins of civilization, the paperback edition. For more information about it, please visit [MY WEB SITE](#)

## Blog Archive

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## Sitemeter

members of the IFR board of directors. Dr. Willeke Wendrich, Dr. Jason De Leon, and Dr. Emily Lindsey: we implore you to reply directly to [fieldschooldirectors@gmail.com](mailto:fieldschooldirectors@gmail.com) with an update on this situation. To protect the privacy of our colleagues, we will then share these updates with all those bcc'd here (unless opted out- see below.)

Primarily, we will appreciate if you can inform us if there has been an internal/external investigation and, if so, what were the conclusions. At the very least, the IFR owes its field school directors a clarification as to the validity of these serious allegations, and why do you think we should continue our affiliation with the organization.

This is not just about yours and the IFR's reputation. It is also about ours. Our names, faces, and contact information are posted on the website for all to see, so your continuing silence on these allegations may only implicate others by association and further hold us responsible for any future harm that may befall students who come to our programs. Beyond academic reputation, informing your stakeholders of any safety concern is obviously the responsible thing to do.

We believe that all those cc'd and bcc'd here hold great respect to the IFR and the support it has provided our projects over the years. We share the hope that the IFR will emerge from these challenging times a much better organization. But now, at least several of us strongly feel that it will be highly unethical to continue our commitment until these issues are clarified and dealt with. Without a formal response we also won't be able to recommend the IFR to our students nor would we continue to refer colleagues to its services.

Anyone bcc'd here who wishes to be removed from this list, please hit reply with the word "Remove" in the subject line.

Respectfully submitted-

Your fellow field school directors.

Although the IFR board has been in touch with field school directors about the cancellation of this year's season due to the coronavirus pandemic, it has not yet responded to this email. I should also point out that I have repeatedly asked Ran Boytner, Willeke Wendrich, and others affiliated with IFR to respond to these allegations, but they have declined to do so.

I will update this blog post as soon as it is merited by further developments.

**Update May 5, 2020:** Ran Boytner has just been removed from the [IFR's staff page](#). The other staff members were furloughed last month and removed from the site then. Interesting, his name has also been removed from the ["Our Story" page](#), where he was previously named as a founder of the organization. Seems quite possible Boytner has now been fired. Updates as they become

available.

**Update May 7, 2020:** While IFR field school directors are still waiting for the institute's board to explain why executive director and co-founder Ran Boytner is no longer listed on the IFR Web page (he has been erased from its online memory, it appears, even from the "Our Story" page), former board of governors chair (and current board member) Willeke Wendrich has taken the moral high road on education secretary Betsy DeVos's terrible changes to Title IX procedures. Wendrich, who is also the director of the [Cotsen Institute of Archaeology](#) at UCLA, [issued a statement](#) yesterday decrying the changes, which in the guise of protecting the rights of the accused put victims of abuse in peril of [being retraumatized via cross examination by their abusers](#).

Wendrich's "Director's Message" includes the following very apt passage:

Archaeology has a checkered past in which the perceived freedom of being in a remote field camp, far away from the normal social standards, in 24/7 proximity, has led to life-long friendships as well as egregious abuse. As a discipline we are slowly coming to terms with the shadow sides of that history and the long shadows it throws into the present. We do so by being explicit, by naming the gains and the problems of our situation in academia and in the field, and by offering open ears and arms to those who either have suffered sexual violence, or those who 'merely' have an uneasy feeling that something is not right in a certain relationship, second guessing themselves until it is too late.

To many IFR field school directors and other archaeologists, Wendrich's statement, while true to the spirit of the #MeToo movement in the sciences, smacks of serious hypocrisy given IFR's failure to be transparent about the allegations against its executive director. As a group of field school directors wrote me today:

While we fully agree with the spirit of the statement, we also find this to be extremely hypocritical and self-righteous that she finds the time and words to react to UCLA's Chancellors, but not to the IFR community when it comes to its "shadowy history" of sexual assault and harassment. Many of us are still waiting for a formal statement that we can take back to *OUR* respective administrations, colleagues, and students. This is outrageous.

As it stands now, we feel that Wendrich's words equally apply to the allegations and coverups within her own organization.

It is well past time for the IFR board to come clean with its field directors, its students, and other interested parties about any investigations it is conducting into Boytner's conduct and the findings--including just why he has been "disappeared" from the Web site. As always, I will report any updates in this matter.



**Update May 11: Ran Boytner speaks.**

Below is an email that Boytner sent to a large number of recipients. It is full of lies and distortions, but I will respond to it in detail tomorrow in a new post. Interesting, Boytner does not address the question of why his name has been completely removed from the IFR Web page and whether or not he is still the executive director of the organization. Since he states clearly that he is speaking for himself and not the IFR board of governors, it remains very puzzling that the board has been entirely silent on the matter (Boytner's statement at the end of this letter that the board has been in touch with all the field directors is another lie.)

From: **Ran Boytner** <[rboytner@gmail.com](mailto:rboytner@gmail.com)>

Date: Mon, May 11, 2020 at 2:07 PM

Subject: Cyberbullying and the IFR

To:

In the past couple of months, the IFR have been the subject of a cyberbullying and disinformation campaign. In a classic disinformation campaign, attacks are based on partial truths, spins and lies. The story is manipulated, self-cited and then presented as new facts. It is time to inform the community and provide facts on this serious matter. Please note that this comes from my personal email and therefore, represent my position only. I intend to first address the accusations and then discuss the credibility of the attackers. This email is a bit long but I am trying to address the main issues raised.

The IFR had been accused of covering up accusations against Danielle Kurin. A blogger suggested that Willeke Wendrich, Kevin Vaughn and myself should have known about accusations and Title IX investigation against her. Here are the facts: Ten days before the field school directed by Kurin in Peru for summer 2016 was to begin, UCLA legal department contacted the IFR and asked for the program to be canceled. Health and safety issues were cited as reason and no other information was provided. UCLA went out of its way to support the students, and together with the IFR, students were either placed at other field schools or received full refunds. These included all airfare costs. There was no threat of legal action as the above refund policy was implemented immediately.

The blogger then accused the IFR for a cover up of Kurin's transactions, although he does not explain why so many people engaged in such activity and what was their gain (there are 19 members at the IFR Board of Governors and Academic Board). He wrote that Wendrich "must have known" and therefore did know but did not share. Kevin Vaughn – then UCLA Extension Associate Dean and the then IFR academic partner – also must have known. And I knew just because, well, because I am a bad

person and bad people know bad things. Here are the facts: As the blogger contacted the IFR about our relationships with Kurin, Wendrich was appointed to act as the IFR spokesperson. She then issued a number of statements over the course of a week to the blogger. The blogger did not line the statements and became rude and aggressive. On March 12 at 4:17pm, Wendrich sent an email to the blogger, writing she is no longer interested in interacting with him. By 4:28pm of that day, the blogger tweeted: "I now have reason to believe that the chair of @IFRArchaeology's board of governors, Willeke Wendrich of UCLA, is lying about what IFR knew and when it knew it. This means the top leadership of the organization is involved in a #MeToo coverup." What new information became available to the blogger in the 11 minutes between the email and the tweet is unclear and unstated.

Whether Kevin Vaughn knew about the investigation is irrelevant. Vaughn worked at the time for UCLA and his duties were to his employer, not IFR. The investigation was confidential, and Vaughn was bound by both law and ethics to keep it as such – until told otherwise. To discuss a confidential investigation with anyone outside UCLA would have exposed Vaughn to serious legal ramification. The blogger suggest that Vaughn should have spread rumors and inform the IFR Board of the investigation that way. Making decisions by rumors is not an advisable way for any organization to take decisions.

There is no explanation why I should have known about the investigation, why I wanted to cover up or what I gained from such behavior. I am, therefore, unable to provide any rational explanation to the blogger's accusation.

During summer 2017, the IFR sent two archaeologists to visit with Kurin's field school at two separate occasions. Their reports and the evaluations of over 35 students were highly positive and the IFR Board decided to continue and to work with Kurin. By 2018, events at the Peru-Wari program caused the IFR to stop working with Kurin and her team.

The blogger accused the IFR in general, and myself specifically, of racism. In 2014/15, the IFR enrollment system came under attack from hackers with Nigerian email addresses. Security systems put in place flagged those attacks and each application was checked manually for authenticity and then removed from the system. The fact that these group of hackers came with Nigerian email addresses does not mean that they were unique or special because they came from Africa. In fact, hacking attacks on the IFR are ongoing and as the IFR Executive Director, I invested heavily in cyber security systems. I think that I am strongly anti-hackers – whether from Africa or anywhere else.

The Blogger accused me of sexual harassment while at the IFR. In early 2015, I had a difficult exchange of words with an IFR employee. To ensure fairness, I asked the IFR Board to conduct

an investigation. Three board members were appointed (two female and one male) and engaged with all IFR employees and an HR specialist. On March 3, 2015, the committee wrote to me: "You asked that we form an ad hoc committee to conduct this investigation and take such action as deemed prudent.....The committee's investigation and subsequent deliberation lead us to the following conclusions: (1) No claim of harassment or discrimination has been made against you as the Executive Director or against the IFR; (2) The committee found no evidence of harassment or discrimination having occurred". There was no whistle blower complaint, nor was there any harassment or inappropriate behavior. That employee was later let go. But not because of the event mentioned above. As the chart below shows, enrollment for the IFR 2016 summer programs was declining. Because the IFR funds its own operation from student fees, it was necessary to cut staff members. Given there were only two people working for the IFR at the time (one more person was an outside contractor), that employee was laid off.

The blogger discussed a 2009 Title IX investigation against me while I was at UCLA. Due to legal restriction, I am unable to discuss the details. I wish I would have been released from this obligation, but such a release was not granted. So all I can do is refer to the blogger's text. The blogger wrote that I was accused of serious violations and sexual assault and harassment. He also wrote that none was substantiated, and that UCLA investigation found I did not violate university policy. Again, I wish I could comment beyond this, but I cannot. All I can say is that UCLA investigation was as thorough and conducted by a professional. It is important to note that the IFR was the first ever organization to create and enforce a sexual harassment and discrimination policy for field work. Unlike any organization I know of, the IFR sends senior staff or board members to investigate such complains in the field – usually within 24 hours of the time such complaint is made. The IFR has a long record of discussing harassment and discrimination issues during orientation with students, during site visits with faculty and establishing a hotline for anyone to contact the organization with complaints. To make sure the policy is enforced, mandatory student evaluations includes several questions asking about that issue. All of the above were my initiatives so I believe the facts demonstrate I care deeply about the issue.

The blogger accused me of bullying staff members. Since inception, the IFR grew – on average – 22% each year. That means that the only constant at the IFR was change. Change is difficult for any employee to manage but it is especially true with nonprofits, where funding is limited and everyone are asked to multi task and work hard. A Wall Street Journal article published today discuss this and similar issues (see attached). A good read that provides some interesting context. By early 2019, the IFR



hired a consulting firm to help manage HR and employee expectations and major improvements were made and implemented since.

The blogger accused me of greed. As I mentioned to anyone I met, the IFR model is designed to create an alternative funding stream for scholars to conduct research. Furthermore, it is designed to establish strong and positive incentives for scholars to excel in both research and teaching. No more field schools as labor camps but places of real teaching and real engagement with students and the public. By 2019, the IFR became the fourth largest funder of academic archaeology research in the US (behind NSF, NEH and National Geographic). For that aggressive growth, I am very proud as I think both scholars and student benefited tremendously. Did I benefit personally? IFR tax records are public document. Anyone can check those and evaluate for themselves. After 10 year of work at the IFR, my annual salary was only slightly over an entry level Assistant Professor salary, and with significantly less benefits. But don't take my word for it. Check it for yourself (for your convenience, Part VII Section A list my salary).

It is time to discuss the accuser himself. Michael Balter calls himself a blogger and a journalist, advocating against harassment and bullying. As demonstrated above, he cares little about facts, checking the record or doing any footwork – as any decent journalist must do. Balter calls for a financial audit of the IFR but never read the IFR annual tax filing – all public record available online. Balter calls for a Registrar of Professional Archaeologists (RPA) investigation into my ethical behavior, but is not a member himself and did not bring any charges – as required by RPA Code of Conduct – against me. I attempted to file a complaint against Balter under Section 2.2(i) for that conduct (“falsely or maliciously attempt to injure the reputation of another archaeologist”) but cannot do that until he becomes a member. Maybe most important is the fact that Balter himself is a serious bully. During the 2019 Society for American Archaeology annual meeting in Albuquerque (NW), Balter was ejected from the meeting by the SAA board for bullying behavior. I have been a member of the SAA for almost 30 years and never heard of such ejection in the past. I am not sure Balter is allowed back to the SAA but given his cyberbullying activity, I venture to guess that he may not be allowed to come back.

The only thing Balter craves is attention. I think it is best to give him none.

There have been anonymous emails from people suggesting they are field school directors, parents or students making a range of demands. It is difficult to address anonymous complaints that are vague, quote the blogger as a reliable source and provide no additional details. Given that the board spoke with all field school

directors and none indicate they have specific concerns, it is difficult to believe any of these anonymous emails are authentic.

Sincerely,

Ran Boytner

**Update May 12: Boytner's response features lies of commission and lies of omission.**

I've given a lot of thought overnight about how best to respond to Boytner's email, reproduced above, which purports to be a response to the many allegations against him. I do want to point out that I asked Boytner many times to respond to the accusations before publishing my original blog post about them, but he never responded (neither did other members of the board when asked to comment on the Boytner allegations specifically.)

I want to spare readers a detailed, point-by-point rebuttal to his lies, other than to say that I stand by [all statements made in the original post](#).

I will, however, comment very briefly on some of the assertions he makes above:

--Both Boytner and Vaughn did know, in 2016, about the Title IX findings against Danielle Kurin. That is supported by both documents and witness evidence. Later, in 2018, when Boytner and IFR allowed Kurin to hold her field school in Peru under IFR sponsorship, Boytner lied to colleagues and told them that Kurin had been exonerated by the UC Santa Barbara Title IX process. He knew was a lie when he said it (and it contradicts his insistence that he had no way of knowing that there was a Title IX case in the first place.)

--I refer readers back to the original post for the details of Boytner's racism. Note that his explanation above is completely at odd with those multiply sourced facts. Even Willeke Wendrich had to ask why a student from Ethiopia she knew (not Nigeria) was denied a field school slot.

--Boytner is essentially accusing former members of staff of lying about the sexual harassment and bullying they suffered while under his supervision. Again, there are multiple witnesses to these detailed allegations, as outlined in the original post.

--The evidence concerning Boytner's sexual harassment case at UCLA is clear, well documented, and the subject of a number of direct witnesses. The fact that UCLA gave him a pass is not

surprising for that pre #MeToo era and is irrelevant to the actual facts.

--Boytner's statement about the events at the 2019 SAA meeting really give the game away. It is widely acknowledged in the archaeology community that the SAA leadership failed to protect victims of a sexual predator (David Yesner, formerly of the U of Alaska) who was present at the meeting, and whom I escorted out of the building. In essence, Boytner sympathizes with the sexual predator and refers to him as a victim of my "bullying."

--Finally, Boytner states that the IFR board of governors has spoken with all the field directors. That is not true. I won't call it a lie right now, because perhaps someone on the board has told him that. If so, it raises the question of exactly what the board is doing and why it will not clarify Boytner's status with the organization (the removal of his name completely from the IFR Web site suggests he is no longer employed by the institute, but that's for the board to say.)

I will continue to report on these matters as new updates are available. My thanks to the many honest colleagues who have helped with this investigation despite risks to their careers.

**Update:** I am bringing up, from the Comments section below, the posting of one colleague on the Danielle Kurin matter. This is consistent with what others have told me, and provides further evidence that Boytner is lying now, and was lying in 2016 and in 2018, about what he knew about the Title IX investigation of Kurin. The question remains why Boytner was so keen to have Kurin's field school go ahead in 2018 despite what he knew; at that field school, Kurin's partner sexually assaulted one and possibly two female students. I have long wondered if the IFR board's silence has been dictated by lawyers who want to protect the institute from lawsuits.

I can confirm, albeit anonymously for now, that Boytner told me in 2016 that Kurin's case at UCSB was related to an ongoing Title IX investigation. He also later claimed that she was exonerated of all charges. The IFR board should have dealt with this a long time ago, before it got out of hand. For various reasons I cannot go on record at this time, but will definitely cooperate fully with any formal investigation launched into this matter.

**Update June 9, 2020:**

An colleague very familiar with UCLA archaeology and

anthropology writes about the questionable relationship between Ran Boytner, UCLA, and IFR, and the pressures put on UCLA grad students to keep their dissertation research within that tight network:

"[Re:] IFR and BoytnerGate. The thing that gets us is that we were basically required to work with IFR and Boytner in order to conduct our dissertation research and, later on, to stay in the game if desired. The combination of less available funding and an increase in size of PhD cohorts narrowed our options for financing excavation. The Cotsen Institute was supposed to be somewhat independently supported by a large donation from the Neutrogena cosmetics mogul, but it seemed to have dried up by the time my cohort was dissertating. (The way that Chip [Charles Stanish] managed the institute is probably a story on its own.) We could get plane tickets purchased by the Cotsen, but that was it. When Boytner started IFR, it was presented to us as "take or leave it - this is how you're going to excavate for the data required for your PhD. And, yes, I was already aware by then that Boytner had issues with sexual misconduct.

"Anyhow, doing a dissertation at UCLA w/out freshly excavated data was not an option. [The colleague gives an example of how they were forced to excavate at IFR sites even when they could get better or more easily obtained data elsewhere.]

"So, most of us used IFR field schools to get our dissertation data. Then, for those who wanted to stay, IFR was pushed as a way to keep excavating and stay involved in the field. Again, the university and Cotsen used to offer mechanisms to bridge postdoctoral years until the person finds a job, but those dried up. Each person I know from UCLA/Cotsen who now has a [tenure track] job had to collaborate with Boytner and IFR. Despite knowing all these things you've presented." [The colleague adds that there might have been some who did not have to do this, but they were rare]

"It did strike me as odd at the time that they were essentially transplanting the field school system from a university (with Title IX reporting obligations??) to a private system."

MB: The most likely explanation for this is that UCLA needed the grad students to make sure IFR was a viable, money making concern, especially in its early days. I have suggested elsewhere that IFR's finances need an outside audit going back to the beginning, because many questions about possible corruption have been raised (I am not claiming they are proven, but the question is there to be answered.) As this colleague summarizes the situation:

"Boytner would not have been able to get IFR off the ground w/out

the free labor of UCLA PIs and grad students, and without Chip elevating it. That's the bottom line. And the grad students and some [principle investigators] were stuck in a hard place w/ no other options."

Posted by **Michael Balter** at [4:20 PM](#) 

### 153 comments:

#### Anonymous said...

I was "bccd" to the letter, not among those who wrote it. But it's 100% true that the board holds us PI's accountable to their high standards when it comes to nondiscrimination and harassment policies, but, it is plain as day that they can't follow those themselves. Bad example. I agree with the others: No reply means voting with my feet.

[April 27, 2020 at 7:01 AM](#)

#### Anonymous said...

Anyone heard anything yet from the IFR?

[April 27, 2020 at 4:37 PM](#)

#### Anonymous said...

On Friday the IFR board of Governors sent an email to all the principal investigators and field school directors with an update on the COVID-19 closure (laid off all the employees) and expressing their commitment to a 2021 field season. We were also invited to voice any concerns with the board members (individual emails provided.) No direct response so far regarding the allegations or the requests made in last week's PI's letter, but maybe we were not informed yet.

[April 28, 2020 at 12:29 AM](#)



#### **Michael Balter** said...

Yes, I have a copy of that email from the board. I have not reproduced it yet because it was oddly predated, and I did not want to dox the emails of the board members. But I can vouch for the fact that the email avoided all mention of the allegations. It's almost as if the board thinks this will just go away if they ignore it.



April 28, 2020 at 4:49 AM

**Anonymous said...**

A direct quote from their policy: "IFR will respond to all reports of harassment, including those brought anonymously or by third parties not directly involved in the harassment." We are still waiting for that response.

<https://ifrglobal.org/students/health-safety/non-discrimination-harassment-policy/>

April 28, 2020 at 12:15 PM

**Anonymous said...**

On March 2 Ran Boytner emailed all PI's stating that "The IFR is committed to a transparent, open decision making process on all issues." Or does this policy not apply when you are the issue?

April 28, 2020 at 1:36 PM



**Michael Balter said...**

What was the context or topic of that March 2 email?  
Thanks.

April 28, 2020 at 1:43 PM

**Anonymous said...**

It was just a general update about the coronavirus and letting us know that the IFR will start cancelling programs according to CDC/State Department travel warnings. Nothing about the allegations but I think that was before the blogs started to come out.

April 28, 2020 at 2:20 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Regarding the above: throughout March I got emails from concerned parents and students in my field school wanting to cancel their participation and getting their money back. I didn't reply because Ran specifically asked PI's not to contact students directly and that communication will come from the IFR. Now it turns out that these students were hoodwinked, first by telling them that the programs will be canceled after the State Department Level IV travel warning, then not canceling immediately after this

was issued and ignoring their refund requests during that week, and now trying to convince them to defer their tuition for “Priority Placement” next year. (<https://ifrglobal.org/summer-2020-cancellation-faq/>). Before keeping the students money in your coffers, the ethical thing to do is ask us first if we even want to run our projects with you next year. The board communication from April 24 only said that we will be contacted “in the coming weeks”

April 28, 2020 at 3:52 PM



**Michael Balter said...**

Okay, this is getting very serious. I will do a Tweet about it, please keep me posted on developments.

April 28, 2020 at 4:08 PM

**Anonymous said...**

This is really serious and I am following this news closely, but I don't understand the way the photos are used in these stories. Why is the image associated with this story an old photo of Willeke Wendrich from her fieldwork (?), I assume. I almost scrolled by it on Facebook because it is not clearly related to the IFR story. Why not instead use the IFR logo? a photo of the director of IFR? This was also the case with the Kurin story. Her husband's smiling photo kept popping up in my FB feed associated with the story instead of Kurin, who was the official director of the program and has a job at UCSB. This may seem like a minor issue, but if the Facebook feed grabs the first photo from the article it should be more relevant to that article so reader's don't miss it. Thanks for everything you do, I will keep my eyes out for updates.

April 28, 2020 at 9:17 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Dear all:

There was a lot of chatter this weekend on private platforms about the IFR disregard for the PI's requests for transparency and clarification. It seems that in addition to the letter published above, other field school directors had written to the board members, but so far, no one that we know of had heard anything back about the said allegations. The only thing so far we all seemingly received was a short email and a PDF

attachment on April 24, 2020, supposedly from the IFR Board of Governors. While we decided not to reproduce the letter here out of respect for privacy, much of the last days' exchange had to do with the tone, errors, and inconsistencies in the Board's message. The most salient points are reproduced here, and, as good social scientists, we do our best to separate facts from interpretation.

1.- The field program directors received the "Board email" on Friday, April 24, only a few hours after receiving the PI's email (some got the former on April 25.)

While the "Board email" completely ignored the PI's requests made earlier that day, this timing is likely not a coincidence.

2.- The letter is predated to April 11, 2020, and the date is written in a different font than the rest of the document. In contrast- the title of the document ("IFR\_UPDATE\_to\_PIs\_042420") and the PDF properties indicate that it was created on April 24, 2020.

We suspect that whoever wrote the letter, deliberately predated the text to distance themselves from the PI's email.

3.- The letter states that the field school directors are "essential partners" of the "Institute of Field Research." As several PI's noted, the correct name of the organization is "Institute FOR Field Research." Since it is unlikely that a Board of Governors member will make such a mistake, this could suggest that the letter was written by someone who is not very familiar with the IFR (lawyer? PR/Crisis Management agency?)

4.- The letter states that the Board of Governors made the decision to cancel the summer field schools on April 1st, 2020 because of the coronavirus pandemic. In fact- the actual decision was communicated to all PI's a week earlier on March 25, and the students on March 26.

Similarly to predating the PDF, this could suggest that the authors are trying to distance themselves from the actual program cancellation date, which in itself was two days after the blog about Ran Boytner was published.

5.- The letter states that all IFR's employees were laid off (which we were very sorry to hear about!). In fact- while all employees' profiles on the IFR website were taken down, the notable exception is that of Ran Boytner who is still listed as Executive Director (see next point);

6.- The letter invites the PI's to contact "a member of the IFR Board of Governors" with any concerns. All seven of the BOG members are listed, with the notable inclusion of Ran Boytner. As pointed above- Boytner is still listed as Executive Director on the IFR staff page (<https://ifrglobal.org/about/staff/>) but not on the Board of Directors page (<https://ifrglobal.org/board-of-directors/>). If Boytner is now appointed as a new Board of Governors member (in addition to his position as Executive Director?), then it will be essential to communicate this to all PI's. This is particularly relevant here due the serious allegations made against Boytner, which can then undermine any investigation on the Board level.

7.- The Board's communication to the PI's came from ifrboardofgovernors@gmail.com. In addition, half of the Board members opted to list their personal rather than institutional emails. There is not a single "ifrglobal.org" address listed, and even Boytner now chooses to use his Gmail address although he always communicated with us through rboytner@ifrglobal.org.

Some suspect that this is their attempt to keep the conversation off the official IFR grid, which can later be subjected to audits etc.

[CONTINUED BELOW]

April 28, 2020 at 9:41 PM

**Anonymous said...**

[CONTINUED FROM ABOVE]

8.- Finally- the IFR office address on the bottom of the page is riddled with question marks (literally.) This indicates that the address was lifted from somewhere else and pasted on this letter. This is another reason to suspect that the document was not composed by the Board members, who surely would have access to an official IFR letterhead.

Beyond all these errors and inconsistencies, many of us feel that if this is the Board's response to the serious allegations and our requests for clarification, then it is an insult to all those "essential partners" who make the IFR what it is with our "exceptional field research and pedagogy."

Yours sincerely-

Disappointed IFR Field School Directors.

April 28, 2020 at 9:42 PM



**Michael Balter** said...

In response to the question about the photos:

There have been several posts, including at least two about Kurin and Gomez Choque and two about IFR.

I have alternated the photos of Kurin and Choque so they both take their turns illustrating those stories.

Likewise, the first story about IFR featured Boytner, as exec dir of IFR. The second story featured a photo of Wendrich from her own UCLA Web page, because it dealt with the IFR board's lack of response to the allegations and Wendrich (as I reported earlier) has not been honest about the matter.

Please look at all the relevant posts on Balter's Blog. I hope that helps.

April 28, 2020 at 9:47 PM



**Michael Balter** said...

Thanks to the contributor for the 8 interesting points, illustrating very strange inconsistencies in the IFR board's attempts to cover up and ignore what has happened here.

I think the web of deceit dates back to at least 2018, when IFR allowed Danielle Kurin to hold a field school in Peru despite Title IX findings two years earlier at UC Santa Barbara that she had retaliated against students who reported sexual assault and harassment by her partner, Enmanuel Gomez Choque. At that, Boytner blatantly lied to colleagues about his knowledge of the 2016 Title IX findings, even though both he and then UCLA Extension dean Kevin Vaughn knew about it (as I indicated in my reporting.) At the 2018 field school, Gomez sexually assaulted two female students. My guess is that IFR knew it could be legally liable because of its prior knowledge of the history of both Kurin and Gomez. I would also speculate that Wendrich knew this too, and some other board members.

Having lied in 2018, Boytner and some board members, according to my hypothesis, feel they need



to continue lying about it all now.

Those IFR board members who are honest, and field school directors who want to get at the truth, might look into why there was a coverup of these now established facts.

[April 28, 2020 at 9:59 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

Wait, so now he's both the executive director AND member of the BOG? This starting to sound like a Jared Kushner kind of success story. Very sketchy path for an organization to follow.

[April 29, 2020 at 4:45 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

Got this from a colleague last night and I must admit these are troubling news. At the SAA several years back Ran tried to recruit me to run a field school with them. At first I thought it was a brilliant idea, but, then he became extremely offensive and critical of fellow colleagues that it eventually turned me off and I never got back to him. I won't repeat what he said but it definitely supports the reports here of racism and sexism. Nonetheless, I do know of others who worked with the IFR to support their research and had a productive collaboration. I also had a student who went to a bioarchaeology field school in Ireland and that great experience helped her get into graduate school.

[May 1, 2020 at 1:41 PM](#)



**[Michael Balter](#) said...**

Thanks for this last comment. From all I hear a lot of the field schools are good value for the students and the directors are serious and dedicated to their work. All the more reason IFR must get rid of the executive director who is pulling the entire organization down into the mud. And as I said before, there should be an outside, fully independent audit of the organization's finances. Sources have told me repeatedly that Ran Boytner was obsessed with how much money IFR was pulling in...

[May 1, 2020 at 1:47 PM](#)



**Michael Balter** said...

Michael- Not sure about a financial audit, but if your claims are even half true then these are startling violations of every professional organization's code of conduct. If the IFR BOD won't do anything, can't the RPA look into it? Ran Boytner is apparently a member, which means he has to abide by their code of conduct or face the consequences.

[https://rpa.memberclicks.net/index.php?option=com\\_mcdirectorysearch&view=search&id=2000292#/](https://rpa.memberclicks.net/index.php?option=com_mcdirectorysearch&view=search&id=2000292#/)

[https://rpanet.org/rpa-code-and-standards/#to\\_colleagues\\_employees\\_and\\_students](https://rpanet.org/rpa-code-and-standards/#to_colleagues_employees_and_students)

May 2, 2020 at 5:10 AM

**Anonymous said...**

Adding to the thread above

(<https://ifrglobal.org/summer-2020-cancellation-faq/>)

"The IFR is working with all current field school directors to have their programs running in 2021... we think we will be able to run 90% of all our current programs." Fake news. I am a field school director and was never consulted about next year. Please stop sidelining us and making false promises to students on our behalf.

May 4, 2020 at 3:13 AM



**Michael Balter** said...

Is IFR holding on to deposits students paid for this year's cancelled season? If so, they should be transparent about how many students are currently "enrolled" and how much money they have put in the bank. Enough to keep paying the executive director's salary, but not that of the furloughed staff?

May 4, 2020 at 6:36 AM

**Anonymous said...**

<https://www.saa.org/annual-meeting/submissions/anti-harassment-policy>

Starting in 2020 the Society for American Archaeology introduce a safety policy and code of conduct for their annual meetings. This may be relevant for those planning to attend the 2021 meeting in San Francisco.

May 5, 2020 at 9:31 PM



**Michael Balter** said...

The IFR board needs to explain to the entire community what it has decided about Ran Boytner, rather than just completely removing his name from the organization's Web site without explaining anything to anyone--especially the field directors. They must realize that they will have to do that sooner or later, probably sooner. That too will have a bearing on whether Boytner should be attending any SAA meetings in the future.

May 5, 2020 at 9:47 PM

**Anonymous** said...

Rumor has it that board members are now having one-on-one conversations with (supposedly, all) field school directors about their plans for 2021. Definitely curious to hear how they will justify all that.

May 6, 2020 at 4:52 AM

**Anonymous** said...

I had a student who was scheduled to be part of Kurin's 2016 field school. IFR tried to do the same thing - offer an alternative field school or to use the money toward a future field school. To get their money back, those students had a lawyer parent among the group and legal action was threatened. At that point, they got their money back and were reimbursed for travel expenses.

May 6, 2020 at 2:48 PM



**Michael Balter** said...

A number of my sources say that for Boytner it was all about the money

May 6, 2020 at 2:51 PM

**Anonymous** said...

Willeke's entire email is an exercise in cognitive dissonance.

The very first line demonstrates that. She begins by coining a new word, "a-historic". She could not find a

single word in the entire English language as it exists today so took it upon herself to create a new word. To explain the etymology of this word she misrepresents the meaning of the word from which it is derived. Historic days aren't just moments with a positive outcome. They have nothing to do with visionary decisions. However, this revisionist mentality allows her to cherry pick which moments are historic. It's what allows her represent herself as a champion of sexual assault victims while simultaneously going to great lengths to protect predators.

"The interpretation of Title IX is in constant flux, but has expanded from equal pay (a goal not yet attained) to protection of sexual misconduct, including fair assessment of alleged victims and perpetrators." In this statement she says that Title IX is for the protection of "sexual misconduct". Perhaps this was just a typo and she meant to say the protection of the VICTIMS OF sexual misconduct. Or perhaps it's a Freudian slip because as it stands, she's stood for the protection of sexual misconduct.

She talks about archaeology's checkered past and even explicitly mentions sexual assault and harassment in the field (brushing right up against the issue) but conveniently neglects to mention the institute for field research and its founder who was pushed out from UCLA for sexual harassment.

"May 6, 2020 is an a-historic day.

Let me explain.

Historic days are times at which transformative visionary decisions are made. May 6, 2020 our Secretary of Education rolled back Title IX measures that were designed to protect students from those in positions that are more powerful, to protect women and men from those who are more likely to be believed.

Title IX, established 48 years ago, is a federal law that prohibits sex discrimination in programs that receive federal funding. The interpretation of Title IX is in constant flux, but has expanded from equal pay (a goal not yet attained) to protection of sexual misconduct, including fair assessment of alleged victims and perpetrators. Sexual harassment, as all types of misconduct and bullying, is closely linked to abuse of power. And it is there, that the present

administration has shown to be short-sighted. Many of those in power have grave difficulty in recognizing and understanding the position of those without. It requires empathetic emotional intelligence, compassionate imagination, and honest concern to understand the position of those living in fear of speaking up, those who are easy victims of undetected or unnamed retribution."

May 7, 2020 at 6:30 PM

**Anonymous said...**

I am not involved in this directly, but maybe the Institute of Field Research and its impacted researchers can take note from this public statement released yesterday morning (Australia time) by Bruce Lander regarding Adelaide Uni allegations. Short but does the trick for now.

<https://icac.sa.gov.au/public-statement/7may2020>

May 7, 2020 at 8:14 PM

**Anonymous said...**

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ahistoricism>

May 8, 2020 at 1:04 PM

**Anonymous said...**

<https://www.archaeological.org/grant/waldbaum-scholarship/>

FYI- The AIA has just announced the seven winners of the Jane C. Waldbaum Archaeological Field School Scholarships, three of whom were scheduled to go on IFR field schools in 2020 (now deferred to 2021.) Is this still happening? If not, these students should be allowed to transfer the award to other non-IFR field schools.

May 8, 2020 at 1:53 PM

**Michael Balter said...**

Re the Waldbaum scholarships: Do we know if the IFR students have already paid their fees, and/or have gotten them refunded? Just more reason why IFR must clarify who is running the organization, if anyone, and what has happened to exec dir Ran Boytner who has now disappeared from the Web site.



May 8, 2020 at 1:56 PM

**Anonymous said...**

I second that. Congrats to the 3 students, but its not their fault that the IFR is in this mess. Don't know if they got refunded, but I do know that at least one of these field school directors are not impressed with the IFR lack of official response to the allegations.

May 8, 2020 at 2:26 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Quick correction to the above: I meant to write that I know of at least one field school director who are not impressed with the IFR lack of official response to the allegations. I actually don't know any of the field school directors listed among the AIA Scholarship winners.

May 8, 2020 at 3:22 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Several students are having issues with getting their money back for canceled programs. IFR board of directors- these students and their parents need these resources, now more than ever. Please help them.

May 11, 2020 at 4:10 AM



**Michael Balter said...**

If any students having trouble getting reimbursed want to contact me privately, please do. They should also be in touch with their field directors, if they are not already, so the field directors can communicate with the board directly about this.

Repeating that IFR's books need an independent audit ASAP.

May 11, 2020 at 6:27 AM

**Anonymous said...**

Thanks Mr. Balter. I;m an instructor, but the IFR (Ran Boytner specifically) repeatedly asked us not to communicate with our students about money and send them his way. I don't know exactly how many paid for

my program, but if any admitted students will write me I will draw their attention to this blog and pass on their complaint to the board.

May 11, 2020 at 12:59 PM



**Michael Balter** said...

Now that Ran Boytner's name has been entirely removed from the IFR Web site, who are students supposed to talk to about their concerns? The board of governors apparently continues to be completely silent. Are they not talking to any field school directors about the current situation? Have field school directors had any responses from the board chair or other board members about their concerns? I would hate to imagine that the institute is just walking away with the students' money and cutting off all communications, but so far that seems to be the case. I would be very happy to be wrong about this.

May 11, 2020 at 1:54 PM

**Anonymous** said...

Field school directors-- You can find the information on your paid students in the last enrollment numbers Boytner emailed on 23 of March.

As a rough estimate based on these and the average program costs published on their website <https://ifrglobal.org/field-schools/>, the total in student fees paid to IFR up to this date should come to at least \$150,000. It is not clear how much of it was refunded to students.

May 11, 2020 at 6:12 PM



**Michael Balter** said...

Could the last commenter post that March 23 email from Boytner here, or send it to me privately? Let's keep on this until the governing board speaks up. Thanks.

May 11, 2020 at 6:19 PM

**Anonymous** said...

Boytner's email just smacks of desperation. He starts by saying that this is a personal email, but all through this gushing tripe he clearly claims to be speaking on behalf of the IFR. Does he even still work there? If

not, what gives him the right to speak for the organization and to the PI's, who are still affiliated with the IFR? Does the board stand behind him on any of these statements and, if not, what is their official response to the allegations? This won't do.

May 11, 2020 at 10:28 PM

**Michael Balter** said...

Yes. Boytner's email includes as many lies of omission as lies of commission. But it is a lie from beginning to end. Tomorrow, when I get some time, I will highlight the most egregious falsehoods and distortions. Needless to say, I stand by my reporting on these matters.

May 11, 2020 at 10:33 PM

**Anonymous** said...

Mr Ran Boytner- the fact that people don't want to reveal their names to you or your like doesn't mean that their opinions or concerns are not "authentic." You are ignoring students requests for refund, so it is obvious that a "lowly" undergrad will not want to reveal her identity when complaining or publishing comments online. Shame on you!

May 11, 2020 at 10:44 PM

**Anonymous** said...

I can confirm, albeit anonymously for now, that Boytner told me in 2016 that Kurin's case at UCSB was related to an ongoing Title IX investigation. He also later claimed that she was exonerated of all charges. The IFR board should have dealt with this a long time ago, before it got out of hand. For various reasons I cannot go on record at this time, but will definitely cooperate fully with any formal investigation launched into this matter.

May 12, 2020 at 11:10 AM

**Anonymous** said...

This ↑ is just it! At the end it doesn't really matter what Balter claims in his blog or what Boytner claims in his email. These multiple allegations are severe enough to merit a thorough investigation by an impartial party. We are not just dealing with another

case of academic argument gone haywire. Students got hurt because someone dropped the ball, and that someone will have to answer for it. I don't think the RPA will conduct an investigation on the institutional level, but, if the IFR will not voluntarily submit proof to the contrary or allow for a third-party inquiry, then something is rotten in the state of Denmark. An till this happens, warning students not to get close.

May 12, 2020 at 12:51 PM

**Michael Balter** said...

Re the previous comment above: As a #MeToo reporter, I have focused a lot my attention on the institutional response to abuses, even as I have tried to expose individual abusers. Key to that is the frequent failure to exercise a "duty of care" to vulnerable students by the institutions in question. The above comment addresses that directly, and I hope that the warning to students to have absolutely nothing to do with IFR until this is all resolved is spread far and wide, loud and clear.

May 12, 2020 at 1:26 PM

**Anonymous** said...

"During the 2019 Society for American Archaeology annual meeting in Albuquerque (NW), Balter was eject from the meeting by the SAA board for bullying behavior."

i think Boytner is getting his wires crossed here. Even Jason De Leon tweeted about it last year, and he's sitting on the IFR board!

"@jason\_p\_deleon

Apr 12, 2019

Michael Balter, @mbalter, a participant in our Saturday #MeTooInArchaeology session has been banned from the #SAA2019 meetings for escorting David Yesner from the conference yesterday. Yesner has a long history of sexual harassment, predation, and assault [followed by Yesner's Title IX story]"

May 12, 2020 at 2:42 PM

**Anonymous** said...

I found this one particularly absurd "Our academic standards are the highest in the business and our quality controls supersede existing systems in any

university, anywhere in the world.” (from Ran Boytner’s letter to the parents-  
<https://ifrglobal.org/about/letter-to-parents/>).  
 In my university, when someone is accused of harassment, there is an investigation. Maybe the parents should sue.

May 12, 2020 at 3:57 PM

**Anonymous said...**

About De Leon, I noticed he very recently tweeted another criticism of the SAA as being “tone deaf about sexual assault and harassment” (check “@jason\_p\_deleon, Mar 10, 2020).  
 I’m sorry to say it, but what a phony. What gives him the right to criticize one organization when he is completely mute about the accusations in the one he’s actually meant to represents? Or maybe he wants to start another tweeter account like last year, but this time #boycottIFR2020? I know several people who would really love to join.

May 12, 2020 at 4:14 PM



**Michael Balter said...**

Re Jason De Leon:

I have been very perplexed at his clearly deliberate silence about the IFR situation. When Willeke Wendrich first responded to my questions about IFR’s role in the Danielle Kurin issues, she copied her emails to both Ran Boytner and Jason. But Jason never responded to any of my followup queries, nor to several emails I sent him personally asking him what was up and why he was not weighing in on the questions--especially, as the commenter says above, given his positive role in the SAA events. I still don’t know what he is thinking and why he has been completely silent. I wonder if IFR lawyers have not told everyone there to stay silent for fear that they will be sued by the women who were assaulted during Kurin’s 2018 field school, which the institute sponsored despite the “health and safety” issues that caused her 2016 field school to be cancelled at the last minute. Perhaps someone who knows Jason personally can see if they can get him to explain his present stance. Meanwhile, unfortunately, he is part



of the problem and not part of the solution, as they say.

May 12, 2020 at 4:21 PM

**Anonymous said...**

If Boytner wants to talk about “facts”, then he should first get his facts right:

“Given that the board spoke with all field school directors and none indicate they have specific concerns, it is difficult to believe any of these anonymous emails are authentic.”;

Actually several field school directors expressed very specific concerns, including continuing working with Boytner, and the board representative assured them that he is out of the picture so they won’t have to.

May 12, 2020 at 6:56 PM

**Michael Balter said...**

I’m talking to a number of sources about this and it seems that board reps are not being entirely candid about whether Boytner is still running the show or not. They seem to be telling some field directors that he is gone, but at the same time there is evidence that Willeke Wendrich is working with Boytner to run a disinformation campaign in an attempt to discredit the allegations I have reported (mainly by trying to discredit me, telling people I am not a “real” journalist, etc.) I think field directors and other colleagues still need to insist on clarity about this.

May 12, 2020 at 7:27 PM

**Michael Balter said...**

So it remains possible that removing Boytner from the staff page and even the “Our Story” page might be an attempt to create the illusion that he is no longer in charge when he really is. I do not claim to know for sure at this point, but field directors should be asking the questions directly.

May 12, 2020 at 7:29 PM

**Anonymous said...**

More facts for Boytner: I’m one of those “authentic” field school directors who are still waiting for the board to contact them. I also strongly support the PI’s

letter, that asks the board for a firm written statement rather than vague verbal promises on Zoom.

And no, this is NOT Michael Balter writing anonymously to himself in his own blog. BOD- you seem to forget that we are your peers, so please give us some credit.

May 12, 2020 at 8:01 PM

**Michael Balter** said...

LOL! Is that what some people are saying, that I am writing all these comments? I wish I had that much imagination. I also understand that some are claiming I am not a “real” journalist. That sounds like something Trump would say. They might ask Brian Richmond, Alan Cooper, et al whether they think I am a real journalist or not. Trying to deflect from the real issues doesn’t make them any less real.

May 12, 2020 at 8:12 PM

**Anonymous** said...

Yep, i was also told specifically that he is no longer with the IFR.

May 12, 2020 at 10:58 PM

**Anonymous** said...

This one’s a bombshell: “Whether Kevin Vaughn knew about the investigation is irrelevant. Vaughn worked at the time for UCLA and his duties were to his employer, not IFR. The investigation was confidential, and Vaughn was bound by both law and ethics to keep it as such - until told otherwise. To discuss a confidential investigation with anyone outside UCLA would have exposed Vaughn to serious legal ramification. The blogger suggest that Vaughn should have spread rumors and inform the IFR Board of the investigation that way. Making decisions by rumors is not an advisable way for any organization to take decisions.”

Boytner basically confirms Balter’s report that Vaughn was aware of Kurin’s Title IX in 2016, but couldn’t talk about it then. So when Vaughn joins as an IFR Board member (assuming before the 2018 incidents), he did not think it was crucial to alert the others that one of their field school directors and her partner were

found guilty of sexual harassment and retaliation? This was long AFTER the investigation was concluded, so how would that consist of being a ‘rumor’? And I would definitely not call it “irrelevant.” Essentially, I think that Boytner just told the world that Vaughn is guilty of withholding information that could have prevented putting IFR students in harm’s way. Whether or not Boytner’s intention here is to frame Vaughn, this is a VERY serious accusation.

May 13, 2020 at 4:48 AM

**Michael Balter said...**

Thanks to the previous commenter for a very important point. And just to be clear: Vaughn DID know about the 2016 Title IX findings against Danielle Kurin and Enmanuel Gomez Choque, which were the result of proceedings at UC Santa Barbara. That is a cold, hard fact. The shutdown of Kurin’s 2016 field school in Peru for “health and safety” reasons was announced to the students two days later in a note signed by both Vaughn and Boytner, as I indicated in my original post on this.

May 13, 2020 at 6:50 AM

**Anonymous said...**

More ‘fact-checking’ in Boytner’s email:  
“The blogger then accused the IFR for a cover up of Kurin’s transactions, although he does not explain why so many people engaged in such activity and what was their gain (there are 19 members at the IFR Board of Governors and Academic Board).”  
He probably meant “Kurin’s transgressions,” unless there are also some shady financial transactions that we don’t yet know about. But the strange thing is that he seemed to have inflated the number of Board members. As of today, there are only 17 listed on their website <https://ifrglobal.org/board-of-directors/>  
According to the Internet Archive ([https://web.archive.org/web/\\*/ifrglobal.org](https://web.archive.org/web/*/ifrglobal.org)), between 2016 and now there were anything between 13 to 17 members. Are there other shadow board members we don’t know about, or did Boytner also lie about their number?

May 13, 2020 at 3:14 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Well, this is spreading faster than the virus... I personally know some of these board members as very responsible colleagues, so am mystified by their inaction and silence or why they even stick around. It's a nonprofit (and they are all well paid anyway), so not greed. And I really can't imagine these guys get much in way of prestige from sitting on this board. So my guess is that they are either brainwashed with blind idealism or, at this point they are too involved in each other's sh\*t that legal is advising them not to comment at the risk of lawsuit (and CDA's). Either way this is going to end badly.

[May 13, 2020 at 4:13 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

Students keep reporting of not getting back their paid fees despite multiple requests from the iFR, and the board keeps avoiding doing that by asking field school directors to "engage" those same students through the summer with weekly lectures (without any remuneration to the PI, of course.) What a scam. Students- it's time to talk to your lawyers.

[May 13, 2020 at 5:52 PM](#)

**Michael Balter said...**

There is a certain desperation, it seems, to the attempts to avoid refunding the student deposits. Hope they have the money in the bank...

[May 13, 2020 at 8:23 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

Thanks for the above, I almost forgot about the wonders of WayBack Machine! The previous posts caught my attention, so I did some research on the IFR Board with some disturbing results, and especially in respect to Boytner's remark "The blogger... does not explain why so many people engaged in such activity and what was their gain."

Did anyone else notice that Charles Stanish, who also signed on Boytner's 'you-did-nothing-wrong-but-from-now-on-shouldn't-have-contact-with-students' preposterous letter, was also a board member in 2016? And later that year, Danielle Kurin has joined that

board as well? In Oct. 2018, and this is now months after the sexual harassment incidents, she's still listed there. Kevin Vaughn joined in March 2018, so indeed before the incidents as the previous post indicates. He should have definitely warned them, and maybe he did but they chose to ignore it because she was a board member.

So to answer Boytner's question- this actually explains a whole lot! These people are basically getting seats on the board in exchange for covering up each other's transgressions. I must admit that this sends chills down my spine.

[https://web.archive.org/web/20160901000000\\*/ifrglobal.org](https://web.archive.org/web/20160901000000*/ifrglobal.org)

[https://web.archive.org/web/20180101000000\\*/ifrglobal.org](https://web.archive.org/web/20180101000000*/ifrglobal.org)

May 13, 2020 at 10:03 PM

**Anonymous said...**

To supplement the fact-check trend above:

Boytner: "Balter calls for a Registrar of Professional Archaeologists (RPA) investigation into my ethical behavior, but is not a member himself and did not bring any charges - as required by RPA Code of Conduct - against me. I attempted to file a complaint against Balter under Section 2.2(i) for that conduct ("falsely or maliciously attempt to injure the reputation of another archaeologist") but cannot do that until he becomes a member."

First, it's REGISTER of Professional Archaeologists, not "Registrar." Not a university.

But more importantly, regarding Balter becoming an RPA member... you do realize that the Register of Professional Archaeologists is for... well, professional archaeologists... right? Not for journalists, you see? Why on earth would anyone even attempt to file that complaint?!?

May 14, 2020 at 11:27 AM

 **Michael Balter** said...

Thanks. Actually I never called for an RPA investigation, and I am not a member of course. I don't know where Boytner got that. But not much in his response to the allegations is accurate.

May 14, 2020 at 11:33 AM

**Anonymous said...**

Students are confused as to how to get their refund, especially since IFR tries to convince them to defer their deposits to next year. It doesn't help that someone removed these direct links from their homepage, making it even harder to find information on the website.

<https://ifrglobal.org/coronavirus-faq/>

<https://ifrglobal.org/summer-2020-cancellation-faq/>

The first page was posted before the program cancellation, and says specifically that "IFR's Withdrawal and Cancellation Policy clearly states that in the event that a field school is canceled, all admitted students will be notified as soon as possible and will receive a full refund of all tuition paid, including the deposit fee."

The second page says nothing about getting your refund if you don't want to defer to 2021.

IFR- please update any of these pages, post this information clearly on your website, and send the link to all your students.

[May 14, 2020 at 2:02 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

Wow IFR, this is really unethical. FYI students, it's just not true that your 2020 payments "allows us to keep on supporting scholars and projects across the world."

<https://ifrglobal.org/summer-2020-cancellation-faq/>). We, the field school directors, do not see a single cent up to a couple of weeks before the program start date. It's anyone's guess, but maybe they are using your money to pay for operational costs like rent and salaries. So we may never get those funds, and you may never get to use those towards your fieldwork. Your best bet is asking for a refund now and then re-apply for whatever programs will be offered in 2021, IFR or elsewhere.

[May 14, 2020 at 3:33 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

<https://ifrglobal.org/students/cancellation-policy/>  
"Resolution of Disputes"

Any disputes regarding the above between IFR and an admitted student that cannot be amicably resolved will be governed by California law and heard



exclusively in a court of competent jurisdiction within Los Angeles County, California.”

May 14, 2020 at 3:35 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Reading the discussion in the comments above, I just realized that Kurin was on the board of the IFR in 2016 (as pointed out by one of the commenters above) <https://web.archive.org/web/20160304131833/http://ifrglobal.org/home/board-of-directors>

She was on the board of the IFR during 2016. so basically, a sitting IFR board member was the subject of an ongoing Title IX investigation and was (allegedly) actively intimidating students and victims to silence them about sexual harassment.

May 14, 2020 at 6:18 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Pardon my ignorance, but regarding the “Resolution of Disputes”, does this mean that any student who wishes to sue the IFR needs to do it in Los Angeles? That sucks, especially for European students.

May 14, 2020 at 7:06 PM

 **Michael Balter said...**

Are there students outside the United States who are not able to get their deposits back from IFR? I hope some field directors and other colleagues will ask about that. It almost seems that the board doesn't care if IFR dies, from the way it is handling this.

May 14, 2020 at 7:18 PM

**Anonymous said...**

OK thanks, i will contact the professor and ask.

May 15, 2020 at 12:41 PM

**Anonymous said...**

I was encouraged to provide this information. I was a student in Danielle's 2017 field school in Sondor (Peru), and the IFR archeologist who visited us was Dr. Boytner. I remember that it made one of the students

really uncomfortable when he was filming and interviewing her while standing right above us in the machai dig area. We are not in touch, but maybe she will read this and come forward. I learned a lot during my time in the project and was not aware of the claims against Danielle and Emanuel. However i was really sorry to hear that other students had such a terrifying experience the year after.

May 15, 2020 at 9:58 PM

**Anonymous said...**

This line made me LOL- "There is no explanation why I should have known about the investigation"  
This coming from an organization that prides itself in a comprehensive peer-review of every program and scholar. Balter's assertion aside that they actually knew -- as a PI who went through their approval process, I find it extremely hard to believe that such a major investigation at UCSB and UCLA wasn't flagged earlier on. Plus, now we learn that Kurin was on the governing board. If they are not vetting members before admitting them to their ranks, well, I suspect other skeletons will soon come out of these closets.

May 16, 2020 at 12:22 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Apropos Balter's UCSB tweet of today and following on the above testimony of the student in Kurin's field school (and much thanks for coming forward):

So when Boytner states in his email "During summer 2017, the IFR sent two archaeologists to visit with Kurin's field school at two separate occasions.", one of those archaeologists was actually him? Odd that he would phrase it like that, but then again maybe not. If he allowed Kurin to run the field school whilst knowing about her 2016 Title IX, it is not surprising his report would be "highly positive" as he writes.

This then leads the ifr board- in which Kurin is now an active member- to decide continuing working with her, which then leads to another vicious cycle of assault, harassment and retaliation. What a mess!

May 16, 2020 at 5:03 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Mr. Balter-

Good day and thank you for allowing this candid exchange of information on this forum. This is helping a lot of people get the justice they deserve.

Below is an excerpt from an email the Institute's director BOYTNER sent to instructors on 3/12/2020. The State Department Level IV travel warning was declared on 3/19/2020. The Institute canceled on 3/26/2020. Take note to the explicit promise to students, and specifically how he refers to the programs' cancellation as the "doom scenario." If the Institute needed to seek loans just to cover operating expenses, it will explain why, seven weeks in, students are still waiting for their tuition refund. I hope this will be informative to your readers.

From: Ran Boytner

Date: Thu, Mar 12, 2020 at 2:45 PM

Subject: New travel restrictions and IFR response

...

What are we doing (today)?

Given the president's announcement with 30 day travel restrictions to Europe and the standing of the travel restrictions to parts of Asia, we must give our students some time to reflect and make decisions. We therefore are pushing tuition payment deadline from April 3 to April 24. We will revisit that deadline as we get closer to that date -- as needed.

What do we promise students?

Full refund of tuition if the IFR cancel a field school. We will cancel programs based on CDC Level III or State Department Level IV travel warning.

How are we preparing for worst case scenario?

The IFR Executive Committee discussed a number of scenarios for this year (we meet weekly and frequently more often). We identified 6 different possible scenarios, including the worst one - cancelation of all programs this summer. To address the "doom" scenario, we are now preserving as much cash as we can. We canceled all travel and all nonessential expenses. Outside of rent, utilities and salaries, we spend no money. We are actively seeking loans to cover operating expenses as we feel whatever will happen this year will pass and there will be a strong, pent up demand next year. We are talking to all PI's of domestic programs and try to increase enrollment in these field schools. We are also trying to shift programs to January 2021 as we hope by then

the coronavirus threat will subside.

Will the IFR survive?

Absolutely. This storm will pass and humanity will learn how to live with the coronavirus. Because students will need field schools to graduate or apply for grad school, there will be significant pent up demand next year and the IFR structure allow flexibility and agility in providing such demand.

...

May 17, 2020 at 3:50 AM

**Anonymous said...**

“pent up demand” ... isn’t that the expression Trump used when talking about next year’s economy and people traveling again?

May 17, 2020 at 12:21 PM

**Anonymous said...**

More Internet Archive forensics of IFR: in respect to Boytner’s story of why he had to lay off the employee that later complained about harassment and bullying. Isn’t it curious that between 2013-2015 this position of Operations/Marketing Manager was restaffed three times, all by women? Very quick turnover. Were they all fired, or some quit? It seems worthwhile to speak to them as well.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20131210144708/http://www.ifrglobal.org/home/ifr-staff>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20141217113437/http://www.ifrglobal.org/home/ifr-staff>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20151220180212/http://ifrglobal.org/home/ifr-staff>

May 17, 2020 at 12:49 PM

**Anonymous said...**

And then again in 2016!

<https://web.archive.org/web/20161026224751/http://ifrglobal.org/home/ifr-staff>

That’s four female employees in four years, for the same position. Very suspicious indeed!

May 17, 2020 at 2:22 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Replying to anonymous comment from May 8, 2020 at 1:04 PM, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ahistoricism>.

You are absolutely right; the term is indeed “ahistorical,” not “a-historic” as Wendrich wrote it. If she actually meant “ahistorical,” then those two dictionary definitions clearly demonstrate that she is using the term incorrectly. The changes to Title IX regulations cannot possibly be considered as “not concerned with or related to history, historical development, or tradition” or “historically inaccurate or ignorant; an ahistorical version of events.” As ignorant as many of these roll-back measures may be, these are directly concerned with a specific historical development.

May 17, 2020 at 10:59 PM

**Anonymous said...**

I participated in the IFR field school in Greece and everyone were just incredible. I would go back there in a heartbeat. What worried me is that the blog talks about constant hacking attacks against the IFR. He says that he is personally taking care of this, but there is this student who complained about a scam mail that came from his email address. I was enrolled in that year (2016) and would like to know if my personal information was also compromised.

This is the post on reddit-

[https://www.reddit.com/r/Scams/comments/5gwf39/i\\_received\\_this\\_email/](https://www.reddit.com/r/Scams/comments/5gwf39/i_received_this_email/)

Hi Maya, I want to send a book from Amazon to your mother but do not have your full address. Can you please send my way? Thanks, Ran Boytner

May 19, 2020 at 3:11 AM

**Anonymous said...**

Re: “bullying staff members”, Ran is notoriously known in the archaeological community as a bully. Stories go back to UCLA and his field school in Chile. I heard it from more than one colleague, and it even slipped out from an IFR board member at the SAAs. Likewise, “major improvements were made” typically means that the workplace situation there was far than ideal. I mean, who ever heard of an office that necessitates a safeword? I wonder if the records of that consulting firm he mentions can be made public.

May 19, 2020 at 11:47 AM

**Anonymous said...**

And another thing. I find it appalling that in the same breath in which he deflects the bullying accusations against him at those employees who were 'maladjusted to change', he goes on to cite growth percentages and recommends a "good read" from the WSJ. That's cold.

Boytner > To blame your failure as a boss on your employees is not just offensive, it is cowardly!

May 19, 2020 at 12:21 PM

**Michael Balter said...**

As we all know, bullies and harassers are hardly the most reliable sources about whether they committed abuses or not. The victims of the abuse have witnesses to back up their stories.

May 19, 2020 at 12:44 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Like I wrote in the other blog, he also cyber-bullied field school directors and staff. Just ask around and people will talk.

May 19, 2020 at 3:36 PM

**Anonymous said...**

"To ensure fairness, I asked the IFR Board to conduct an investigation."

Is it common practice for non-profit Boards to conduct investigations into harassment and discrimination of employees? Are they qualified and properly trained to conduct inquiries into such serious matters? Can they even be considered an impartial investigatory task force? (potential bias due to personal loyalty, financial investments, damage to reputation, institutional self-preservation, and so forth.)

I should also think that testifying to a committee of Board members would be an extremely intimidating experience for any employee. No wonder that this person did not say much at the time, even if she was subjected to harassment and discrimination by the CEO.



Under such circumstances it is largely irrelevant what the committee reported back in 2015, and it certainly does not nullify her present-day testimony. The assertion that “nor was there any harassment or inappropriate behavior” is entirely unfounded, as we can only know that it was not reported or recorded at the time.

I mean, don’t you read the news?

May 19, 2020 at 11:26 PM

**Anonymous said...**

More deception in Boytner’s email:

Quote: “The blogger accused me of greed ... IFR tax records are public document. Anyone can check those and evaluate for themselves. After 10 year of work at the IFR, my annual salary was only slightly over an entry level Assistant Professor salary, and with significantly less benefits. But don’t take my word for it. Check it for yourself (for your convenience, Part VII Section A list my salary).”

Fact check (from IFR public tax records;  
<https://apps.irs.gov/app/eos/>; EIN: 27-5556305).

1) The available tax records that the IFR filed and Boytner invites us check, are from Tax Year 2017. Part VII, Section A lists Boytner’s salary as \$80,000. Since IFR was created in 2011, this is clearly not his salary after 10 years of working there, as he stated. Since he does not provide his up-to-date salary, one can even assume that after three years this salary is actually higher.

2) A current entry level salary of Assistant Professor in anthropology departments in the US, which is what Boytner should be compared against, is roughly between \$45,000-\$61,000.

<https://www.owlguru.com/career/anthropology-and-archeology-teachers-postsecondary/salary/>

In 2017-2018 it would have been lower. \$80,000 is definitely not “slightly over” the highest range, and almost double the lowest range.

4) Professors’ benefits are dependent on the state, institution, department, etc. Therefore, without additional information as to Boytner’s current benefits, stating he receives “significantly less benefits” is completely meaningless.

In conclusion: the only statement left as genuine in the above quote, is "don't take my word for it."

May 20, 2020 at 3:31 PM

**Michael Balter** said...

I can't help but be amused that Boytner refers to me as "the blogger," as if I had no credibility as a journalist. With 40+ years experience as a reporter, 25 years as a correspondent for Science, and many years teaching journalism at Boston University, New York University, and currently City College of New York, I can't consider the "blogger" label to be an insult. Blogger pride!

May 20, 2020 at 3:41 PM

**Anonymous** said...

Thanks, downloaded their 990 from the IRS site and posted the direct link on the bottom. What grabbed my attention immediately is in Schedule L - the loans of Yuval Bar Zemer to the organization in September and October 2017 [Part II reports 100,000\$ but Part V only 90,000\$, not sure why.]

Bar Zemer, a developer in Los Angeles, is currently listed as Chair of IFR Board of Governors:

<https://ifrglobal.org/board-of-directors/>

A position he took over from Willeke Wendrich on September 2017, the same month he gave the loan: August 2017:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20170723060704/http://ifrglobal.org/board-of-directors/> [Wendrich listed a chairperson]

September 2017:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20170922162256/http://ifrglobal.org/board-of-directors/> [Bar Zemet listed as chairperson]

Not sure about NPOs rules & regulations on having a major (and only?) financier also filling the chairperson position, but it definitely raises ethical questions as to the timing of the appointment and what interests are guiding the organization. If investors can "buy" board seats, sounds like profit takes precedence over academics.

Ethics aside, 100,000\$ is quite a hefty loan. Of which, 99,726\$ were still owed in 2018 [Schedule L, Part II]. More the reason to believe that they are drowning in debt and therefore cannot pay back the students, as

indicated in the preceding comments.

[https://apps.irs.gov/pub/epostcard/cor/275556305\\_201810\\_990\\_2019080216543939.pdf](https://apps.irs.gov/pub/epostcard/cor/275556305_201810_990_2019080216543939.pdf)

May 21, 2020 at 4:04 AM

**Anonymous said...**

Can someone who received the original email post a link to the WSJ piece that he cites? It was not included in the blog.

May 21, 2020 at 4:13 AM

**Anonymous said...**

Not sure if this will get posted as I saw no other contradictory comments. But worth trying...

1. IFR is located at Los Angeles. Here are Assistant Professor salaries at public universities in and around the city: University of California system:

\$66,100-\$86,600 (); California State University Asst Prof salary average is \$84,497 (). According to the Chronicle of Higher Education, a California State salary average for Assistant Professor faculty is \$93,001 ().

2. In 2016, UCSB placed Danielle Kurin on leave from UCSB, due to an investigation by the Title IX office on campus. By early 2018, Kurin was reinstated as a full time, ladder faculty with research and teaching duties like any other faculty member. Both of these events were public knowledge to UCSB faculty, both within and outside the anthropology department. In 2019, Kurin was brought for tenure review, as Balter reported, indicating that the above is a fact. I do not know the facts of the investigation or its findings. But the Title IX office at UCSB consists of professional staff who specialize in Title IX violations. If, after 2.5 years of investigation, they decided to return Kurin to her ladder faculty post without any stated restrictions, seems to me that Boytner assertion that she was exonerated (whether he said that or not) is true. I am not sure what the lie is here.

3. The IFR Board of Directors makes its decisions each year about which field schools to approve and which to reject. Per IFR web pages 2015-2020, Boytner was not a member of the board at that time. So the decisions to hold Kurin's field schools in 2017 and 2018 were made by the Board, not by Boytner. As the Executive Director, Boytner certainly had the ability

to present data that may be misleading. But Charles Stanish (UCLA), Willeke Wendrich (UCLA) and Kevin Vaughn (UC Riverside) served on the IFR Board at the time and had access to data and colleagues from UCSB. Difficult to believe that Boytner was able to mislead those three, plus all other IFR board members, to do something they did not want to do. What was the motive or the incentive for over a dozen leading archaeologists to cover up for Kurin? None was documented or identified thus far.

4. The UCLA Title IX investigation, as reported on this blog, found that Boytner did not violate university policy. That means, at least to me, that allegations were not substantiated. There is a big difference between being accused of wrong doing and being found guilty of doing those. Similar to UCSB, the Title IX office at UCLA is staffed with professionals. If they decided no policy was violated and no allegation substantiated, how can anyone who did not engage in another, thorough investigation can claim otherwise?

5. On May 2 of this year, Balter wrote in a comment (see this string) that “If the IFR BOD won't do anything, can't the RPA look into it? Ran Boytner is apparently a member, which means he has to abide by their code of conduct or face the consequences.”

Boytner then wrote that he invites such an investigation, but that Balter is not an RPA member and that neither Balter or any other RPA member (many IFR field school directors are RPA members) made an official complaint to the RPA. In a comment to Boytner's published letter, anonymous wrote that the RPA is just for professional archaeologists and that Balter is not one and therefore cannot be a member. However, the RPA has a Registered Archaeologist (RA) category ( ) where the requirements are BA in related field and two years of experience. Given Balter stated experience of 25 years as a correspondent for Science (comment on this string dated to May 20) and a book about Catal Huyuk archaeology, is it not possible he may qualify to be an RA member at the RPA? Is it not worth at least trying so he may file a complaint and allow the RPA to investigate?

[May 21, 2020 at 3:29 PM](#)

**Michael Balter** said...

I'm publishing this last Anonymous comment because nearly every statement in it is wrong. But instead of

going through it point by point, I will identify the most egregious error: I reported earlier on the documentation that both Kurin and her partner Gomez had been found guilty in the 2016 Title IX proceedings, documentation that I was provided by UCSB via the California public records act. So Kurin was not exonerated and that is documented.

If the commenter does not even bother to read what I have reported, that reflects badly on their credibility. Readers can let me know if they want me to comment on any of the other assertions made above.

May 21, 2020 at 3:35 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Anonymous @3:29PM wrote:

“4. The UCLA Title IX investigation, as reported on this blog, found that Boytner did not violate university policy. That means, at least to me, that allegations were not substantiated. There is a big difference between being accused of wrong doing and being found guilty of doing those. Similar to UCSB, the Title IX office at UCLA is staffed with professionals. If they decided no policy was violated and no allegation substantiated, how can anyone who did not engage in another, thorough investigation can claim otherwise?”

Dear Anonymous -

Thank you for the very interesting read. Since you are so familiar with Ran Boytner's past, I wonder if you can comment on the following in Balter's blog of March 23, 2020:

“Moreover, sources reliably inform me that the student eventually sued both Boytner and UCLA, but the suit was settled quietly for an undisclosed amount of money.”

Was Balter lying? This seems to be a very crucial piece of the story, so I wonder if you can shed light on this as well. Thank you.

May 21, 2020 at 4:39 PM

**Michael Balter said...**

I would just add to the above that a Title IX investigation in 2009 was not worth the paper it was printed on at most universities. Stanish made clear in

his letter to Boytner, and the victim made clear in her allegations, that inappropriate behavior had taken place. UCLA simply chose to give Boytner a pass, as should be clear from the circumstances and the later lawsuit by the victim.

May 21, 2020 at 4:54 PM

**Anonymous said...**

In response to “Can someone who received the original email post a link to the WSJ piece that he cites?”

Try this:

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/what-i-loveand-hatemost-about-being-an-entrepreneur-11588986524>  
What I Love—and Hate—Most About Being an Entrepreneur

May 21, 2020 at 7:01 PM

**Anonymous said...**

The UCLA Title IX investigation, as reported on this blog, found that Boytner did not violate university policy. That means, at least to me, that allegations were not substantiated. There is a big difference between being accused of wrong doing and being found guilty of doing those. Similar to UCSB, the Title IX office at UCLA is staffed with professionals. If they decided no policy was violated and no allegation substantiated, how can anyone who did not engage in another, thorough investigation can claim otherwise?”

... but then Stanish fired Boytner so at least to Boytner the difference isn't so big afterall.

May 21, 2020 at 11:43 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Thanks. Maybe he loves to compares himself to guys like Hoffman, which is a bit funny, a bit sad, and full-on delusional. But then again, him recommending this article to everyone probably means he's already thinking of his next big venture. Students beware.

May 22, 2020 at 5:03 AM

**Anonymous said...**



Anonymous said on May 21, 2020 at 3:29 PM:

“In 2016, UCSB placed Danielle Kurin on leave from UCSB, due to an investigation by the Title IX office on campus. By early 2018, Kurin was reinstated as a full time, ladder faculty with research and teaching duties like any other faculty member. Both of these events were public knowledge to UCSB faculty, both within and outside the anthropology department ... the decisions to hold Kurin’s field schools in 2017 and 2018 were made by the Board ... Charles Stanish (UCLA), Willeke Wendrich (UCLA) and Kevin Vaughn (UC Riverside) served on the IFR Board at the time and had access to data and colleagues from UCSB.”

Thanks to the above anonymous commenter for confirming that Danielle Kurin was the subject of a Title IX investigation and related leave while sitting on the IFR board between 2016 to 2018. This also confirms that the IFR board allowed her to run two back-to-back field sessions in 2017, BEFORE they found out that she was reinstated in 2018. The commenter also suggests that since this was public knowledge at UCSB, other IFR board members in the UC system, such as Stanish, Wendrich, and Vaughn, would have most likely known about it. So far, this seems to confirm everything that Balter was saying. <https://web.archive.org/web/20170621182321/http://ifrglobal.org/program/peru-sondor/>

May 22, 2020 at 11:56 AM

**Anonymous said...**

Replying to this Anonymous Comment:

“In 2019, Kurin was brought for tenure review, as Balter reported, indicating that the above is a fact. I do not know the facts of the investigation or its findings. But the Title IX office at UCSB consists of professional staff who specialize in Title IX violations. If, after 2.5 years of investigation, they decided to return Kurin to her ladder faculty post without any stated restrictions, seems to me that Boytner’s assertion that she was exonerated (whether he said that or not) is true. I am not sure what the lie is here.”

If Kurin was really “exonerated” in 2019, does this mean that the IFR made a mistake by stop working with her after the events at the Peru-Wari program, as Boytner indicated in his email from May 11?

May 22, 2020 at 8:24 PM

**Anonymous said...**

I'm sorry, but this is just silly. From the RPA website:

- RA category is for archaeologists who are dedicated to a professional career in archaeology and do not have an advanced degree.

- Qualified applicants must have a bachelor's degree in Archaeology, Anthropology, or a closely related field, along with at least two years (24 months) of full-time professional experience.

- Have at least two years of supervised work experience within the archaeological field.

- Have a thesis or equivalent work completed.

With all due respect to Balter, I don't think he's qualified. So if Boytner is still waiting for Balter to join as RA just so he can file a complaint, then he should not hold his breath. On the other hand, according to the RPA grievance procedure anyone can file a complaint against Boytner, even Balter.

May 22, 2020 at 9:24 PM

**Michael Balter said...**

Yup, i'm not qualified. But as a reporter, I am qualified to ask why the board won't tell us whether Boytner is still the executive director of IFR or not

May 22, 2020 at 9:45 PM

**Anonymous said...**

I actually thought that the above commenter -- which I will call R.B.\* for short-- is absolutely right! Balter is indeed a qualified individual with 25 years of experience of as a correspondent for Science and is a published author on Çatalhöyük (Great book, by the way.) He is definitely not the 'bully blogger' That Ran Boytner tried to depict him to be in his ranting email.

\* As in- "R"esponding to "B"alter

May 22, 2020 at 11:18 PM

**Anonymous said...**

<https://data.chronicle.com/category/state/California/faculty-salaries/>

The commenter @May 21 seems to be slightly

confused about reading the Chronicle/IPEDS data. \$93,001 is an average for assistant professorship across all disciplines/departments in California. Anthropology salaries typically rank much lower than, let's say, entry-level asst. prof. in engineering, health sciences, or business schools. Perhaps a better measure are the self-reported wages further down the page for the social sciences. Consider the more realistic ranges for California State University-Fresno (\$43,364) and San Francisco State University (\$60,300). The salary submitted for University of Southern California (\$110,000), if not a reporting error, is likely in economics. Most full professors in anthropology don't make that much! Besides, if Boytner is making \$80,000 a year and has \*any\* sort of benefits, especially in this economy, he should consider himself lucky and not whine about it.

May 23, 2020 at 1:18 PM

**Michael Balter said...**

I've suggested earlier that IFR's books should be examined by an independent auditor, just to make sure that Boytner (and other board members?) were not receiving additional hidden compensation that was not reported to the IRS in the 990 forms. I am not making any specific accusations, but an organization so lacking in transparency that it won't even tell the archaeological community who the current executive director is might have something to hide. (I've also suggested that they might be acting on the advice of attorneys, worried that victims of sexual assault could sue IFR for negligence.)

May 23, 2020 at 1:47 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Speaking of data and graphs- did anyone else notice how in the graph he included in his lengthy email Boytner neglects to include the y-axis, which will show the actual number of students that enrolled between 2014 and 2015? Field school directors from those years can go back to Boytner's emails and see that the delta was minor, probably less than five students. Omitting scales is the oldest trick in the book on how to manipulate data (literally, see below). I also have it on good authority that this employee was fired less than two weeks after that harassment

and discrimination investigation was concluded. Given that this was still in March 2015, it just doesn't jibe with his provided rationale of "That employee was later let go. But not because of the event mentioned above ... enrollment for the IFR 2016 summer programs was declining". Did five students really justify letting an employee go, and so promptly after she complained? None of this computes, and in my opinion makes it more likely to be a case of retaliatory discharge.

About manipulating graphs:

[http://www.preciousheart.net/chaplaincy/Auditor\\_Manual/12decepd.pdf](http://www.preciousheart.net/chaplaincy/Auditor_Manual/12decepd.pdf)

And my favourite: Huff, Darrell. 1954. How to Lie with Statistics. W. W. Norton & Company, New York.

May 24, 2020 at 6:13 AM

**Anonymous said...**

Catching up on last weeks comments here. This must be a new low, if a "professional archaeologist" is waiting for a journalist to join the RPA just so s/he can file a grievance against him. Makes a mockery of a very serious protocol.

May 27, 2020 at 1:04 PM

**Anonymous said...**

This is on the YouTube channel of the Costen Institute of Archaeology,

<https://youtu.be/oQyAPWUCul0>

Stimulating research and good value to the community. But in light of everything that I read, what's weird is that Dr. Wendrich doesn't even once mention IFR nor does she acknowledges it at the end. Isn't it odd to forget an organization that keeps supporting and promotes your research, even more so if you are sitting on their board of directors? Or maybe she's trying to distance herself from a brewing shitstorm?

May 29, 2020 at 4:35 AM

**Anonymous said...**

Michael- re the piece you tweeted today:

<https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2020/5/29/harvard-anthropology-gender-issues/>

"We want to underscore the seriousness with which

we take all such allegations and our strong commitment to addressing them using every means at our disposal to create a department climate that is free from harassment and sexual misconduct,” Subramanian and Flad wrote.

Harvard's Anthropology interim chair, Rowan Flad, is also on the IFR board. It's disappointing that he is willing to provide a long statement in response to such issues in his department, but still nothing about the equally serious allegations at the IFR. According to the Crimson, he even took steps to reduce contact between harasser and students. I guess you have to be an Ivy Leaguer in order to deserve an explanation and see results.

May 29, 2020 at 4:42 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Harvard!.... WHOA... and what's with these Andeanists!!!

<https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2020/5/29/harvard-anthropology-gender-issues/>

May 29, 2020 at 7:36 PM

**Anonymous said...**

WayBack Machine indicates that Rowan Flad was also on the board from 2016 during the Kurin Title IX issues. Now he's running interference for MacArthur Fellow and Dumbarton Oaks Professor Gary Urton?

May 30, 2020 at 9:31 AM

**Anonymous said...**

According to his CV online, Flad was on IFR board of directors from 2011 - 2015 and on the academic board from 2015 - present. Not sure what is the difference or why the move. Kurin joins the Academic Board on 2016 and left (removed?) in 2018. There was definitely an overlap there, and together with Boytner, Wedrich, Stanish, and Vaughn, now Flad also seems to be complicit in these many coverups.

<https://anthropology.fas.harvard.edu/people/rowan-flad>

May 31, 2020 at 4:20 PM

**Anonymous said...**

FYI - Rowan Flad was also with Ran Boytner in grad school at UCLA. A quick online search reveals that many other Ifr board members were at UCLA around those years, including Lynn Swartz Dodd, Anthony P. Graesch, C, Willeke Wendrich, Jason De León. Charles Stanish was also at Ifr and UCLA, and according to Michael Balter's report he was the one who gave the carte blanche to Ran Boytner after he was accused of inappropriate sexual behaviour. This is a very small pool to draw board members for a non-profit, but certainly helps to explain why they are all covering up for Boytner and for each other. It's just another close-knit club like Harvard.

June 1, 2020 at 5:46 AM

**Michael Balter said...**

Re the above, I have neglected to mention earlier that Boytner is good friends with Willeke Wendrich's husband, he is basically a friend of the family. That might also explain a lot.

June 1, 2020 at 6:32 AM

**Anonymous said...**

Not surprised. This mutual smoke-screening is very prevalent in academic circles. Even more disturbing is how deep their hypocrisy goes. Just yesterday, The Harvard Crimson released these quotes from Flad: <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2020/5/31/anthropology-department-forms-standing-committee/>

“The allegations in yesterday’s article have had a devastating impact on our department,” chair Ajantha Subramanian and interim chair Rowan K. Flad wrote in an email to The Crimson. “They have left members of our community feeling confused, vulnerable, betrayed, and angry. They have also revealed long-standing problems that require urgent attention.” “While the mechanisms for investigating allegations and imposing sanctions fall outside the purview of the department, there is much that we can do internally to rebuild trust and empower our most vulnerable members to speak out,” they wrote. “We are committed to repairing and rebuilding our relationships over the long term to create a more



supportive, safe, and equitable departmental culture.”

And previously Wendrich released a statement to her UCLA community denouncing DeVos’s rollback of Title IX measures. Yet none of these eminent scholars consider it appropriate to formally respond to the published allegations against IFR. There can be only one conclusion: that inviting an external investigation into IFR will reveal that all are guilty in the cover-up that harmed students.

June 1, 2020 at 1:50 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Don’t forget that their salaries are paid by their universities, not the IFR. Maybe that’s why they’re not bothering.

June 1, 2020 at 3:21 PM



**Michael Balter said...**

Re the previous comment: I do find it odd how little the governing board of IFR seems to care about the reputation of the organization. Willeke Wendrich and a few others might have themselves convinced that these reports are from a lowly "blogger," as Boytner implied, and thus no one is paying attention. Of course, as a correspondent for Science who covered anthropology and archaeology for more than two decades, and who has also reported on misconduct in those fields the past five years (with significant results in terms of forced resignations and terminations of abusers) most in these communities know my reputation for accurate and careful reporting. So even though these investigations are not published in Science or the New Yorker, they still carry a lot of weight. I wrote about why I use my blog to publish this reporting in the Columbia Journalism Review last year, for those who have not seen it:

<https://www.cjr.org/opinion/metoo-academia-sexual-assault-harassment.php>

June 1, 2020 at 3:27 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Oh, I can assure you (and them) that people are paying close attention. AAMOF, Wendrich's "a-historic" Title IX statement of last month is still rubbing many the wrong way, but they prefer to keep a low profile out of fear of 'collegial' retaliation (which is ironic considering the topic.) I must [anonymously] agree: quite a bold move to preach to the community about a "moral compass" when you are on the spot for enabling sexual predators. First clear your name before shouting from the UCLA rooftops.

[June 1, 2020 at 8:14 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

As someone who's been in a very similar situation and knows the type well, I agree that the director sounds like a bona fide sociopath. But - this also means he can't help himself, at least not without professional help. In this instance, as in many others, the real perpetrators are the governing board who appointed him and kept him in this position for that long, despite clearly being aware of his improprieties. It is them who need to be held accountable for this institutional failure and damages caused to clients.

[June 2, 2020 at 12:25 AM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

I saw that a while ago and wasn't really going to say anything, but the previous comment makes a good point. This is from her May 16 2019 twitter feed: "It is time to say it and remarkably hard to do so. #MeToo #YouKnowMe"

<https://twitter.com/wzzw/status/1129085950087159808>

What a hypocrite!! She knew about the title IX cases and yet did nothing and continued to send students into the lion's den. Shame on her.

[June 2, 2020 at 1:26 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

There is another important angle not mentioned above to the IFR-Harvard connection:

Dr. Jade d'Alpoim Guedes, who up to last year was on the IFR board, shared on twitter that she was sexually harassed by Gary Urton when she was a graduate

student at Harvard.

<https://twitter.com/JadeArchaeobot/status/1267605974426120192>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20190430152047/http://ifrglobal.org/board-of-directors/>

It is not clear why d'Alpoim Guedes is no longer listed on the IFR board, so wondering if she quit because of the similar allegations against Kurin and Boytner. It is time to dismantle this web of silence once and for all!

[June 2, 2020 at 2:06 PM](#)



**Jade d'Alpoim Guedes** said...

Hi Anonymous, That is pretty much one of the reasons why I quit the IFR board. I was shocked that this could have happened at a field school of ours and by Ran's attitude. I will say though that the rest of the board was as shocked as me when they heard and took this really seriously and took firm action and kicked Danielle and her field school out. I wish I had been told about the title IX at UCSB but knowing everything I know now about how this process works I'm not surprised I was kept in the dark. I also quit because of what I learned about how IFR staff were treated.

[June 2, 2020 at 3:02 PM](#)

**Anonymous** said...

Dear Jade d'Alpoim Guedes-

Not the same anonymous as above, but still would like to thank you for your candid revelations regarding Urton and the reasons you quit IFR. I realise this must have been difficult, both now and then. For various reasons many who write here cannot expose their identities, so your contribution to this particular discussion means a great deal. Sending strength to one and all!

[June 3, 2020 at 4:18 AM](#)



**Michael Balter** said...

<https://twitter.com/mbalter/status/1268225935628787712?s=21>

[June 3, 2020 at 1:07 PM](#)

**Anonymous** said...

And here's UCLA and the Cotsen institute again. Castillo was in graduate school with Boytner and a student of Stanish, respective sexual predator and his enabler. What were they teaching there?

[June 3, 2020 at 2:58 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

Arthur Demarest deserves some real scrutiny here as well. After Harvard, he went on to harass students and faculty at Vanderbilt for years all under the protection of the university administration.

<https://as.vanderbilt.edu/anthropology/bio/arthur-demarest>

[June 3, 2020 at 3:55 PM](#)



**Michael Balter said...**

Yes, Demarest is still a problem after all these years. He is on my blog's Rogue's Gallery of sexual predators and bullies.

[June 3, 2020 at 3:56 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

I would like to follow the above commenter and also thank d'Alpoim Guedes for her response. I reckon that some IFR board members were kept in the dark, but others were clearly in the know. If they deny that now, then they also lied to their fellow board members.

Dear IFR board: d'Alpoim Guedes' comment above is an invitation for the rest of you, who still have control over the fate of the organization, to come forward with an official statement on the state of IFR leadership. If Boytner was also responsible for the Kurin fiasco, in addition to his documented harassment case at UCLA, then he should be definitely removed.

[June 3, 2020 at 6:24 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

GRACIAS POR COMPARTIR ESTAS HISTORIAS CON TODOS. HAY QUE SEGUIR LUCHAR CONTRA EL COMPORTAMIENTO HOSTIL Y EL HOSTIGAMIENTO

## SEXUAL EN LA ARQUEOLOGÍA ANDINA Y EN EL ÁMBITO ACADÉMICO EN GENERAL.

June 4, 2020 at 10:13 PM

### Anonymous said...

Reports are circulating of an IFR board member (not Guedes) who very recently remarked to colleagues that Kurin was “a ticking time bomb” for the institute. With all due respect to those who want to protect their friends and colleagues, let us not forget that students were harmed as a result of this public gaslighting. This should never happen again, so people should come forward.

June 5, 2020 at 11:27 AM

### Anonymous said...

Agree. Normally I would call for an immediate dissolution. In this case - keeping the IFR intact will only help with an outside investigation and bring swifter justice to those students.

June 5, 2020 at 12:54 PM

### Anonymous said...

Important updates on the IFR website  
<https://ifrglobal.org/>

“June 4, 2020

We hope that you and all those whom you love are staying healthy and safe as we all reflect on the urgent need for transformation in our society. In April 2020, in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, IFR canceled our Summer 2020 field school season and laid off our staff. Since then, IFR’s Board of Governors has been managing the organization, monitoring the pandemic, and working hard to deliver value to our students and field school directors. We have tried to reach every student enrolled in a 2020 field school, but we have not heard back from everyone. If you enrolled and paid a deposit or tuition for a 2020 field school, please get in touch with us at [info@ifrglobal.org](mailto:info@ifrglobal.org)

IFR is offering enrolled 2020 students who defer to a 2021 field school a range of opportunities, including a six-week Master Class featuring live access to many of our exceptional field school directors. IFR recently

began rehiring key staff members in order to bring this beneficial, exclusive opportunity to our enrolled students, details of which will be linked to this website next week. Expect to hear more from our team in coming weeks, including our plans for a limited Winter 2021 field season and Summer 2021 field season.

We are grateful to our stakeholders for your patience during this challenging time. We look forward to seeing some of you in our upcoming Master Class, and can't wait until we can share a transformative live field school experience with all of you.

IFR has been transforming individuals and communities through experiential education and field research since 2011. Our concern for the safety of students, staff, and the communities in which we work guides everything we do."

[June 5, 2020 at 1:04 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

<https://ifrglobal.org/>

FYI - yesterday's updates about deposits, staff rehiring, Master class.

[June 5, 2020 at 1:50 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

"IFR recently began rehiring key staff members"  
Are they bringing Ran Boytner back??? This is very concerning.

[June 5, 2020 at 2:31 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

Just so everyone reading this thread are properly informed: Wileke Wendrich has been telling people that ex-director Boytner was kicked out of the organization.

[June 5, 2020 at 3:15 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

Harvard anthropology faculty to Urton: "The strong evidence put forth in these allegations has destroyed our confidence in your ability to be a teacher, colleague, and productive member of the department," they wrote. "We see your continued



presence as an impediment in our efforts to move the department in a more equitable, responsive, and responsible direction.”

If Flad was willing to sign on this letter, why is he not responding to the allegations regarding Boytner? Do survivors have to be his former graduate students, or former IFR board members, in order to get his attention?

June 5, 2020 at 6:29 PM

**Anonymous said...**

So after all was said and done, still no statement about the allegations. Who these people think they are?

June 5, 2020 at 7:01 PM

**Anonymous said...**

And IFR is still trying to rewrite history. The cancellation of the field schools was not made on “April 2020” as they vaguely write and date the previous update. The cancellation was announced exactly on March 25, two days after Michael Balter published his accusations against IFR director Ran Boytner and others in the board.

Placing events in their correct chronological context should be important for archaeologists.

June 5, 2020 at 10:16 PM

**Anonymous said...**

IFR, you can see how it’s done here:

<https://anthropology.fas.harvard.edu/>

Simply cut and paste this text into your home page, and don’t forget to replace “department/university” with “IFR” and “Harvard Crimson” with “Balter’s Blog.” It’s really not that difficult!

“A series of recent articles in the Harvard Crimson reported serious allegations of sexual harassment and abuse by several faculty members affiliated with this department. The behavior described in the allegations is abhorrent. The fact that it has not been adequately addressed at a departmental level until now points to serious failings in departmental structure, communication, and climate, in the wholly inadequate response to sexual violence across the

university, and in the way the administration communicates with departments. The articles also drew attention to long-standing problems of discrimination and inequality in the department that require urgent attention, problems that contribute to a climate in which abusive behaviors can thrive. We as a faculty feel deeply the harm that has been caused and are committed to doing everything we can to repair that harm to the extent possible, and to ensure that it does not happen again. We stand by all those who have been affected by this and are humbled and inspired by their courage in speaking out.

Our immediate focus is on what we can do internally to rebuild trust and empower the most vulnerable members of our community. We have convened a standing committee to investigate existing departmental structures and propose recommendations for dismantling those that have contributed to an environment in which abuses continue to manifest and go undetected. We understand that this is only a first step on a long path, and we are committed to doing what it takes to repair our relationships and foster a more supportive, safe, and equitable department culture.”

[June 6, 2020 at 12:03 AM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

There are former and new(?) staff members listed on the IFR website, but Ran Boytner is nowhere to be seen. Was he not “rehired”?  
<https://ifrglobal.org/about/staff/>

[June 7, 2020 at 1:31 AM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

This is absolutely insane if true: sources report that when Kurin was still on the board, she was appointed as a member of the \*IFR Sexual Harassment Committee\*, AFTER she was found guilty of retaliating against students who complained about her predator husband. WTF IFR?

[June 7, 2020 at 7:07 AM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

Heard it too from Willeke that Ran Boytner is definitely not coming back, and that this decision has nothing to do with the pandemic. Now what?

[June 7, 2020 at 12:34 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

Is it verified that Boytner is out? His affiliation is still Institute of Field Research on Academia.edu and LinkedIn

[June 7, 2020 at 4:58 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

Michael- your tweet today brought me back here. I saw the blog a while ago but only now realizing the extent of these comments. Everyone I talk to, or rather Zoom with, pretty much agrees that Boytner's comebacks read like the rants of a lunatic. My favorite line so far: "The only thing Balter craves is attention. I think it is best to give him none". Unfortunately for him, he brought all this attention onto himself by writing this self-incriminating email. At this point, the only statement that wasn't completely debunked is: "I am a bad person".

Thanks for bringing these important concerns to the attention of the archaeological community. I'm sure that this "Boytner-Gate" will be a major conversation topic at the next SAA's. I hope you can attend.

[June 7, 2020 at 7:15 PM](#)

**Anonymous said...**

It's almost like these guys are given a pamphlet from their universities on how to lie to the public:

URTON: "In response to the allegations in the affidavit, Urton wrote last month that he had never violated FAS policies on sexual harassment and that, due to confidentiality rules, he could issue nothing but a blanket denial of allegations against him."

BOYTNER: "[Balter] wrote that I was accused of serious violations and sexual assault and harassment. He also wrote that none was substantiated, and that UCLA investigation found I did not violate university policy. Again, I wish I could comment beyond this, but I cannot."

[June 8, 2020 at 2:51 PM](#)

### Anonymous said...

From the recent update on <https://ifrglobal.org/>, the IFR Board of Governors writes:

“Our concern for the safety of students, staff, and the communities in which we work guides everything we do.”

Here is what we’ve learned in the last three months about the IFR Board:

- 1) They let Ran Boytner, an archaeologist charged with inappropriate behaviour with a student at a UCLA field school and was likely fired for it, to create and direct a global field school organization and have continued access to students. Many of these board members were studying and working together with Boytner at UCLA before and during those events.
- 2) They let Boytner bully, harass, and retaliate against IFR staff members, even when they knew about his past misconduct. One employee reported of sexual harassment and was fired. Employees complained to the board on several occasions, but they ignored them.
- 3) Some of the board members also knew about Boytner’s discriminatory vetting of African students, and yet did nothing. Who knows how many deserving students were denied the opportunity of a field school or scholarship, simply because they were Nigerian or were suspected as hackers?
- 4) Even after the multiple allegations against Boytner became public, they let him keep his position as Executive Director. They later gave him a position in the IFR Board of Governors.
- 5) They let UCSB professor Danielle Kurin sit on the IFR Board and on the Sexual Harassment Committee, while she was charged with Title IX violations on retaliating against students who complained about sexual harassment by her husband. Some of the board members clearly knew about it, but kept lying to others in and outside the organization.
- 6) They then let Kurin direct several field schools with the IFR, and sent students to work with her sexual predator husband. This resulted in more students getting sexually harassed and assaulted. These students report lasting trauma.
- 7) The Board’s cover-up of these allegations damaged the reputation of other IFR field school directors, by ignoring their requests for clarification and denying them statements they can present to their respective

administration, colleagues, and students.

8) They made false promises to students, namely assuring them that field schools will be offered in 2021 before even discussing it with the field school directors.

9) They ignored and side-lined students and parents who were asking for their tuition refund, long after they cancelled the programs.

10) Despite numerous demands from concerned students, parents, faculty, field school directors, administrators, and community members to conduct an investigation, the IFR Board still keeps silent and refuses to take a public stance on any of these allegations.

Instead, they just write "Our concern for the safety of students, staff, and the communities in which we work guides everything we do."

June 9, 2020 at 3:58 AM

**Anonymous said...**

Regarding the most recent update:

You also have to ask why the faculty at the Cotsen have been consistently taking on new graduate students, especially in oversaturate fields such as Egyptology and Classics, when there are simply no tenure track jobs available. I remember one year when about 6 students received their PhDs. I'm not sure how many of them actually got jobs. Yet every year, more students join the program. Willeke Wendrich herself has her attention divided because of her involvement in a number of projects such as the digital humanities project, the IFR, Ethiopia and Egypt. How does one justify taking on this many students and being able to properly mentor and prepare students to compete in a field where it's statistically harder to get a job than Hollywood.

The answer may lie in the fact that these students are simply a source for funding. The Cotsen gets funding for taking on these students and then these students are used to run field projects for the IFR which in turn receives funding from undergraduates who one day hope to get into grad school. These undergrads are told that the only way their application for an archaeology program will be taken seriously is if they

show they've been to a field school. It's a MASSIVE pyramid scheme (no pun intended).

June 9, 2020 at 1:42 PM



**Michael Balter** said...

Re this last comment, please see the June 9 update above, just posted, on the same topic.

June 9, 2020 at 1:45 PM

**Anonymous** said...

Just another incompetent and self-serving board, plenty of those in academia these days. Frustrated to see De León still there. I used to think of him renouncing the SAA as a courageous, stick it to the man, kind of move. Now I realize it was just cowardly, washing his hands of responsibility. I'm actually relieved that I won't have to face him at the next SAA.

June 9, 2020 at 4:21 PM

**Anonymous** said...

I know! And the irony is that just last week he was awarded UCLA's Chancellor's Award for Community-Engaged Scholars. I guess Block is not informed yet of what's going on right under his nose.

June 9, 2020 at 6:23 PM

**Anonymous** said...

What is stated in the above comment and the June 9 update is absolutely true. Back in 2009, many faculty and staff at the Cotsen heard about Boytner's harassment of the USC student in his Peru field school. There was a lot of murky cover-up on why he was fired in November 2010, but the timing of it was right after the student sued Boytner and UCLA for damages in the Superior Court of California (and this can be easily proven with UCLA records.)

Willeke Wendrich joined the Cotsen that same year and was already teaching at NELC for some years, so I also find it extremely hard to believe she also didn't know. In all those years or when she took over the directorship of the Cotsen in 2016, Chip must have told her that he prohibited Boytner from engaging with undergraduate students without a third party



present due to this inappropriate behavior. Instead, both of them helped Boytner build the IFR and were then given seats on the board.

If Wendrich does not have a good explanation on her involvement in these events, she may as well offer her resignation.

June 10, 2020 at 12:14 AM

**Anonymous said...**

Attention everyone: I went to drop off something at the address listed on their wwebiste and Facebook page. But the door was locked and the next door office said that they cleared out. It looks completely empty from the windows outside. I took photos. The address on the website is

Institute for Field Research

2999 Overland Ave. #103

Los Angeles, CA 90064

I really don't trust them one bit, so if anyone has any information where they moved to please post it here.

June 10, 2020 at 2:41 PM



**Michael Balter said...**

This post was accidentally deleted. by an anonymous poster

Confirmed:

<https://42floors.com/us/ca/los-angeles/2999-overland-ave>

The address on the IFR website, 2999 Overland Ave Unit 103, is listed as vacant and available for rent since May 28, 2020.

Unfortunately, I do not know where they moved to. Have you tried calling or emailing them?

<https://ifrglobal.org/contact/>

June 10, 2020 at 4:19 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Crooks!

Turns out even the name of the institute is stolen from another non-profit:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Institution\\_for\\_Field\\_Research\\_Expeditions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Institution_for_Field_Research_Expeditions)

June 10, 2020 at 9:43 PM

### Anonymous said...

To the above Anonymous and others: soon after today's comments were posted, the address on the IFR website and facebook was changed to> 1855 Industrial St. Unit 106, Los Angeles, CA 90021. Try that. Oh, and hi there IFR! Thanks for following Balter's blog and reacting so rapidly. You still have to fix the Google Map portion on the "contact us" page. Please feel free to chime in if you read anything else in here that you think is inaccurate or false.

June 11, 2020 at 5:24 AM

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